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OLD MASTERS AND NEW

VERONESE: "MARTYRDOM OF ST. GEORGE"

OLD MASTERS AND NEW

Essays in Art Criticism

BY

KENYON COX

NEW YORK
FOX, DUFFIELD & COMPANY
1905

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TO JOHN LAFARGE

who best, in our day and country, has exercised the right of the artist to speak on his art, these essays, with which he will not always agree, are respectfully inscribed by

THE AUTHOR

THE GOSPEL OF ART

WORK thou for pleasure; paint or sing or carve
The thing thou lovest, though the body starve.
Who works for glory misses oft the goal;
Who works for money coins his very soul;
Work for the work's sake, then, and it may be
That these things shall be added unto thee.

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CONTENTS

PART I

PAGE

Sculptors of the Early Italian Renaissance 3

Perugino 11

Michelangelo 18

The Pictures of Venice 48

Veronese 63

Dürer 82

Rubens 96

Frans Hals 104

Rembrandt 115

William Blake 127

PART II

Painting in the Nineteenth Century 135

Ford Madox Brown and Preraphaelitism 149

Millais 165

Burne-Jones 176

Meissonier 183

CONTENTS

PAGE

Baudry 193

Puvis de Chavannes 210

Whistler 227

Sargent 255

The Early Work of Saint-Gaudens 266

Saint-Gaudens's "Sherman" 278

Index 287

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

VERONESE: Martyrdom of St. George . . . FRONTISPIECE

PERUGINO: Virgin and Child . . . . . Facing page 16

MICHELANGELO: Libyan Sybil . . . . . " " 38

TINTORETTO: Pallas driving away Mars . . . " " 56

KEY TO COMPOSITION OF
Veronese's Marriage in Cana . . . . . " " 80

DÜRER: Melencolia . . . . . " " 92

RUBENS: The Garden of Love . . . . . " " 102

HALS: St. Adraen's Shooting Guild . . . . . " " 110

REMBRANDT: The Syndics . . . . . " " 122

PRUDHON: L'Enlèvement de Psyché . . . . . " " 136

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

MILLAIS: The Huguenot . . . . . " " 166

BURNE-JONES: The Annunciation . . . . . " " 180

BAUDRY: Pastoral Music . . . . . " " 204

PUVIS DE CHAVANNES: The Sacred Wood . . . " " 222

WHISTLER: The Mother . . . . . " " 242

SAINT-GAUDENS: Sherman . . . . . " " 278

PART I

Old Masters and New

SCULPTORS OF THE EARLY ITALIAN RENAISSANCE

DONATELLO, Verrocchio, della Robbia, Mino da Fiesole, Benedetto da Majano—their very names are as music in our ears, calling up visions of ineffable grace and beauty. Their charming art has influenced the best art of our own day more, perhaps, than any other. From the time when Paul Dubois turned to them for inspiration, and produced his little "Saint John Baptist" and his "Florentine Singer," a new and brilliant epoch of French sculpture began, and Falguière, Mercié, and the rest of their school, with such men of our own as Saint-Gaudens, French, and Adams, owe much of what is purest and best in their work to the study and the example of these old Italians. Many even of the best painters of to-day would own their deep indebtedness to the "sweet influences" of this placid constellation shining serenely through the ages.

Since, then, the work of these men is so great a factor in moulding the art of to-day,—since they have had, and still have, so eminently healthful and invig-

orating an influence upon contemporary sculpture,—it may be well to consider them somewhat closely, to endeavour to comprehend their aims and their methods, and to find, if possible, the secret of that subtle, evanescent, yet enduring charm which steals upon the senses

> "Like the sweet South
> That breathes upon a bank of violets
> Stealing and giving odours."

To do this, we will begin at what may seem at first a long distance from the subject.

It has often been remarked that the schools of painting in which colour has been predominant have been the great naturalistic schools as well, and there have been various speculations as to the cause of this fact. Ruskin's theory, that the production of beautiful colour *requires* an absolute fidelity to nature, any deviation from natural fact introducing a discordant note and so ruining the colour-harmony, certainly seems untenable. Would it not be truer to say that beautiful colour *permits* fidelity to nature? There is in the human mind—at least in that variety of it which produces works of art—a natural shrinking from bare, hard fact. The absolute truth of things as they are, with no softening of angles or hiding of uglinesses,—Mother Isis without her veil,—would be intolerable to us. The schools of colour restore her veil to nature and wrap her in the mystery of atmosphere; they charm us with deep, vague harmonies, and entice

the imagination into impenetrable shadows. With them everything is mysterious, and therefore nothing is shocking. They can afford to give us the facts of nature because they give them to us mitigated as they are in nature. But the schools of the line strip nature of her atmosphere and her colour. With them everything is hard, dry, and defined, and they are apt to feel that the least ugliness—the least falling short of ideal beauty—would become unbearable under the glare of their white light. They cannot bear the least defect, the least commonness, the least naturalness of nature, but refine upon and polish their forms, finding nothing pure or noble enough for them, and forever missing the rough grandeur and homely beauty of this every-day world which is constantly to their hand.

If it is, then, so difficult to avoid the matter-of-fact in painting, which deals only with appearances, how much more difficult is it in sculpture, which deals with actual substance. A statue is much more definite than any picture. It is not a representation of form, it *is* form. It is itself a fact. This is the great problem: how is the sculptor, with his stubborn material of solid stone or massive bronze, to avoid the stumbling-block of too great reality?

There have been three great schools of sculpture which have differed widely in their solution of this problem. The Greeks may be compared to the schools of form in painting—what are known as the classic schools. They sought relief from the hard facts of

nature in nobly ideal forms, abstracted from all accident and all individuality. They could not give the mystery and infinitude of nature, and they would not give the material imperfections of things divested of nature's mystery. They therefore formulated an ideal of what nature ought to be, of what seemed to them the primal type, freed from the thousand variations of its actual carrying-out; and, this ideal once established, they adhered to it rigidly. Their answer to the problem is, abstraction. The sculptors of the Renaissance, before Michelangelo, gave another answer, which we will discuss at length later on. Michelangelo gave a third answer. Though his towering genius can never be too greatly admired, yet he was in some respects less technically accomplished than either the Greeks or the earlier Renaissance sculptors, and did not understand either the glorious purity of the Greek ideal or the system of delicate half-modelling of his immediate predecessors. He has an ideal and a beauty of his own, but he lacks both the serene perfection of the Greeks and the delicate Renaissance suggestiveness. Such of his marbles as are finished have a certain unsatisfactoriness which he seems to have felt himself. He felt the need of an escape from reality, as the others had felt it, and he found it in rough-hewn, unfinished blocks, which powerfully excite the imagination. Until quite recently he has had no followers in this, and has constituted a school by himself. His answer to our

problem (not an altogether satisfactory one) is, unfinish.

The answer of the earlier Renaissance sculptors was, lowness of relief. They are the colourists of sculpture. Their aim was to give something which should answer to the atmosphere and mystery of painting, and so to be enabled to give it variety, individuality, and naturalness also. To do this (working more or less unconsciously, as artists do, and probably without analysing their aims or processes) they invented and carried out a system of low relief which is one of the loveliest and most perfect means of artistic expression that have ever existed. Of course the Greeks had used bas-reliefs, and used them exquisitely; but their reliance, even in their medals, is upon the same quality of large abstraction and generalisation as in their statues, not, as in the Renaissance work, upon suggestiveness and vagueness and its accompanying naturalism and individuality. There are Italian reliefs which are almost inconceivable in the delicacy of their modelling. They seem hardly more than sketched with slight touches of shadow upon the marble. The relief is so infinitesimal, the modelling so subtle, that they seem hardly to exist; and one fears to obliterate them with a careless brush of the hand, as one might a charcoal drawing. They are not form, but the merest suggestion of form, faint and vague and fleeting as a beautiful dream.

But these wonderful men did not stop here. Having

perfected their system of low relief, they applied it to sculpture in the round. In their busts, in their statues, they still model, as it were, in low relief. Nothing is made out, nothing is realised; the intention is indicated, and that is all. The hollows are not as deep as in nature, nor the projections as high. The hand of the sculptor has paused with delicate self-control, just before the suggested form was quite completed, and has left the rest to the imagination. This is not lack of finish, as with Michelangelo. No; the surfaces are caressed into beauty with an infinity of loving care. It is an intentional stopping short of complete realisation; it is lowness of relief. This application of low relief to sculpture in the round is the great discovery of the Renaissance sculptors. They had learned how to give nature with its mystery and its atmosphere; how to give, not form, but the appearance of form. They cast a thin veil over the hard facts of nature, which the imagination delights to penetrate.

Their reward was a nearness to natural truth which the Greeks could not dream of. No art gives us such an invigorating sense of freshness of inspiration as this. "The world is all before them where to choose"; as they realise no facts, they can suggest all; through the veil of their illusive modelling they can show us the infinite variety and individuality of nature, and, Antæus-like, they rise with renewed strength from their constant contact with mother

earth. They are no longer bound to a definite type of ideal beauty, but can wander at will among the thousand accidental graces and half-awkward beauties of real human beings. They give us, not a magnificent abstract conception of Olympus, but an endlessly delightful portrait of the world we live in.

Lowness of relief: Have we not found at last the true answer to our problem? We may not say that this art is greater than Greek art, but is it not more human? Does it not appeal more closely to our human nature? Does it not instruct and charm us more? It has the charm of the intimate. How quaint, how sincere, how *naïf* those old Florentines were; with what wide-open, truth-seeing eyes they looked at the universe, and with what manly simplicity and frankness they recorded what they saw. Every one of their statues is a portrait: one has but to look at it to be convinced of that. So, and not otherwise, must the real original have looked. Many of their best works are professed portraits, and their living quality is extraordinary. Look at any of the portrait-busts by these men. Can fidelity, truth, vitality, be carried further? Are not these very people alive before you? Do you not feel an intimate acquaintance with them—a profound conviction that you must have met them yesterday? Do you not love the women, and like or hate or admire the men?

There is no more wonderful work in this kind than that masterpiece of an unknown hand which is called

the *Femme Inconnue* of the Louvre. Here are the lowness and vagueness of relief, the floating, undefined modelling, the delicate finish of surfaces, the exquisite modulation and subtle curvature of line, the frank simplicity of aim, the individuality and vitality of the whole, all in their utmost perfection. What a work of art and what a pearl of women! There she is as she lived in Florence four centuries ago, with her daintily poised head in its demure cap, her slender neck and half-developed breast, her bewitching eyes, and her indefinable, evanescent smile.

She lived in Florence centuries ago,
  That lady smiling there.
What was her name or rank I do not know—
  I know that she was fair.

For some great man—his name, like hers, forgot
  And faded from men's sight—
Loved her—he must have loved her—and has wrought
  This bust for our delight.

Whether he gained her love or had her scorn
  Full happy was his fate.
He saw her, heard her speak; he was not born
  Four hundred years too late.

The palace throngs in every room but this—
  Here I am left alone.
Love, there is none to see—I press a kiss
  Upon thy lips of stone.

PERUGINO.

THERE is a kind of mystery about Perugino, in the seeming contradiction that his art has always been accepted as pietistic and religious, while the man has been set before us by Vasari as irreligious and avaricious, or, as Berenson puts it, "an atheist and a villain." People find that pictures of his evoke the religious emotion in them, and they cannot believe that this is possible unless the man himself experienced religious emotion. How, then, explain the character drawn for us by Vasari? The general method is that adopted by Mr. Williamson, in his book on Perugino in the series of Great Masters in Painting and Sculpture, and is like that other well-known solution of an insoluble problem—"The boy lied." It is so much the fashion nowadays to contradict Vasari that critics find it very easy to assume that he was wrong, though the proof they bring against him is often of the slightest. Let us see how it is done is this instance. The charge of avarice is simply ignored. The defence against the charge of irreligion is in two parts. The first part is, as far as it goes, a fair argument. After Perugino's death his sons "entered into a contract with the monks of San Augustino, who were still in their father's debt 50

scudi, that they should remove his body from Fontignano and bury him in their church, and the sons agreed to pay for the Mass. Mariotti says that there was in his time no proof that that ever was done; but," says Mr. Williamson, "the very fact of the contract proves that nothing could be said to the discredit of Perugino's life or character, and refutes idle rumour as to his athiesm." Two pages later we have again: "His employment by the Church, not only by the Chief Pontiff, but by numerous dignitaries and by many religious orders, and the arrangement just mentioned and entered into by his sons as to his burial, sufficiently refute Vasari's statements." The second part of the defence is that "it is inconceivable that such pictures as the Pazzi 'Crucifixion,' the San Severo 'Deposition,' the Vallombrosan 'Assumption,' to name but three typical ones, could be painted by an irreligious man"; and this part is nothing else than a begging of the whole question at issue. This is the whole defence as given by Mr. Williamson, and apparently all the defence that has ever been made.

Now, if the fact that Perugino was employed by the Church is to prove his religion, it is evident that the character of every artist of the Renaissance is safe. They were all employed by the Church, which was for long the only employer, and yet it has been thought that some of them were bad men, and some of them were certainly more Pagan than Christian.

As to the bargain for Perugino's interment, it is to be noticed that there is no proof that it was ever carried out, and that it is at least conceivable that Perugino's bad name may have prevented its fulfilment. But even if it were carried out, does it prove anything? Did the Catholic Church ever refuse burial to the body of any one on the ground of reputed irreligion, unless there had been condemnation for heresy or open contumacy? Was it not rather the policy of the Church to claim as its own every one who could be persuaded to conform to its ceremonies, and has any one stated that there was any lack of outward conformity on Perugino's part? Vasari may have been repeating "idle rumours" without serious foundation. On the other hand, he might almost have had personal knowledge of Perugino, and may very well have known men who knew him intimately. Certainly the mere facts of Church employment and honourable burial can by no stretch of logic be held to "refute" his precise statements. The defence breaks down, and the only argument left is that of "inconceivability." Is it really inconceivable that the painter of Perugino's pictures should have been the man Vasari drew?

It is well to begin with an exact statement of what Vasari really said, and of the kind of man he really makes Perugino out to have been, for the vague terms of atheism and avarice are misleading. He represents Perugino, then, as of a resolute, pushing, and practical

nature, a man who, through early poverty and struggle, had come to put a high value upon material success, and had determined to gain wealth; and he represents this incentive as a good thing, and "an assistant in the cultivation of the faculties and for the attainment of excellence." Perugino, he says, was furiously industrious, "turning night into day, and labouring without intermission," and "he placed all his hopes in the goods of fortune, and would have undertaken anything for money"; but he was also rigidly and even scrupulously honest and touchy on the point of commercial honour, as the anecdote of the bowl of ultramarine testifies. Finally, he "possessed but very little religion, and could never be made to believe in the immortality of the soul, nay, most obstinately did he reject all good counsel, with words suited to the stubbornness of his marble-hard brain." There is nothing here about atheism or avarice in the strict sense of the words; only a material and practical nature and a hard-headed scepticism. The character answers very well to the features that look at us from the wall of the Cambio, and it corresponds well enough, it seems to me, to the kind of man that should have painted the pictures we know. For if there is one thing plainer than another, it is that Perugino was a commercial painter as truly as any modern that ever sold himself to a dealer. Most of his best work was done early in life, while he was striving for a reputation. When he had got it, and had found a pattern of religious picture

that was in demand, he ceased to make any progress, supplied the demand by wholesale as rapidly as possible, and degenerated while those around him were progressing rapidly.

Perugino had half-a-dozen attitudes that occur over and over again, and only one face, subject to the accidents of age and sex. Not only are his pictures nearly all on one plan, but certain figures occur again and again, line for line, and detail for detail. In the thirty-eight plates of Mr. Williamson's book St. Michael appears three times with slight variations of costume, but no essential change of attitude. Certain angels turn up five times, and three times more with a variation—the same variation—in the pose of the hands. It is even one of the best proofs of the authenticity of the much-discussed "Resurrection" of the Vatican, that whoever painted the picture had access to Perugino's cartoons and used them for these angels. There are four other angels, playing on musical instruments, in the "Ascension" at Borgo San Sepolcro that occur again exactly copied in the "Assumption" of the Florence Academy, only their relative positions have been changed and one of them is reversed; the cartoon having evidently been turned wrong side out and pounced through from the back. St. Sebastian has always the same pose, only reversed on one occasion; the Christ of the Academy "Crucifixion" is not only from the same model as that of the Pazzi "Crucifixion," but has identically the same folds

of drapery, and so has the Christ of the "Crucifixion" in St. Augustine's, Siena; and there are almost countless other instances of a similar economy. These repetitions were notorious in the artist's own day, and he was reproached for them; his answer being, in substance, "These are the same figures you once admired; why are they not good now?" But even when the figures are not literal copies of each other, they are so mannered as to show that the artist can have made little fresh study from nature after his earliest days. These round faces with their silly little features and sweet smiles, these lackadaisical attitudes with head on one side, these curling ribbons and spindle shanks and toes turned out beyond the bounds of anatomical possibility, are irritating enough to some people to make them echo Michaelangelo's famous boutade at the "blockhead of art."

But if Perugino was a commercial painter, he was an honest merchant, and, though he was content to give the monks what they wanted, with little trouble of fresh invention, yet his craftsmanship was always sound, his technique admirable. And there was one spark of the true artist in Perugino, one great quality which he possessed, one thing which he painted with heart. This thing was landscape, of which he is one of the great masters; and this quality is a truly wonderful sense for and power of expressing space. Picture after picture of his is saved and rendered impressive by its background; in picture after pic-

PERUGINO: "VIRGIN AND CHILD"

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ture you escape past the feeble and perfunctory figures into the large and tranquil landscape beyond, and breathe deep with pleasure and exaltation of feeling. Mr. Berenson, in his acute analysis of "The Central Italian Painters of the Renaissance," has pointed out this power of what he calls "space composition" as characteristic of the whole Umbrian school, and has maintained that it is only by virtue of this power, and the consequent evocation in the spectator of a "sense of identification with the universe," that "art can directly communicate religious emotion." If this be true, is there any longer any mystery about Perugino's character? In the rendering of space in landscape he was the greatest of all masters, save only Raphael; the rest is ecclesiastical millinery. But until it is proved that it is requisite for the representation of space that the artist should have attained intellectual conviction of the immortality of the soul, we need not worry about his irreligion.

MICHELANGELO

THE rhapsody with which, in the life-time of of his hero, Vasari opened his Life of Michelangelo was written by a professed follower of the master, but it gives a not unfair notion of the estimation in which the great man was held by his contemporaries and his immediate successors. To them he was the one supreme and "divine" artist. They saw that he had crowned the edifice, so long a-building, of Florentine art, that he had finally and completely done what others had been trying to do for more than three hundred years. They saw, also, that his genius had transformed the arts of painting, of sculpture, and of architecture into something different from what they had before been, into something reflecting his own strong personality; and they looked upon him as the great teacher, as one who had shown the way to a grander if less graceful art than any they had known. They could not see that the very completeness of his achievement was the death-knell of his school, and that he had at once exhausted the old mine from which so much precious ore had been extracted and the new vein which he himself had opened.

The Florentine School, which culminated in Michelangelo, was pre-eminently the school of draughtsmanship and of the human figure. The Florentines were rarely colourists, cared little for landscape, and were not always masters of composition, but they were all draughtsmen; and from the time that Giotto first put fresh life into the embalmed body of Byzantine tradition each master had added something to the stock of knowledge and had come a little nearer to the realisation of the Florentine ideal of significant drawing—of that treatment of form which renders its solidity, its structure, and its movement more instantaneously perceptible than they are in nature itself. The greatest of them all, Masaccio, had done work which has in some respects never been surpassed, and which his successors never ceased humbly to study while art was alive in Florence. When Michelangelo Buonarotti Simoni was born, on Monday, March 6, 1475, Verrocchio, Botticelli, and Michelangelo's future master, Ghirlandajo, were at their best, and another, Florentine by education, though not by birth, and more Florentine than the Florentines in his style, Luca Signorelli. A greater than any of these, the first in date of the artists of the culmination, Leonardo da Vinci, was twenty-three years old at Michelangelo's birth, while the third of the great triumvirate of the high Renaissance, Raphael, was born eight years later, in 1483. Between Michelangelo's birth and Raphael's came in one year, 1477, those of

Giorgione and of Titian,* the two artists who were to show a new road to art when the Florentine and the Umbrian had set their *ne plus ultra* upon the old.

Michelangelo's family were gentlefolk, who fancied themselves of high origin, and who vainly opposed his vocation to art. In 1488, at the age of thirteen, he was formally apprenticed to Ghirlandajo, then engaged upon the frescoes of Santa Maria Novella. During the year that the apprenticeship lasted Michelangelo must have gained all the knowledge of the practice of fresco-painting that he ever had until he began the ceiling of the Sistine. At the end of that time he decided to become a sculptor, and went for study to the Medici Gardens, where he began to hew out marbles intended for the Library of San Lorenzo, acquiring that mastery of the chisel which he always retained. There also he carved a mask of a faun, supposed to be his earliest extant work, which, if it is indeed that preserved in the Bargello, is no great thing. Lorenzo, we are told, treated the young sculptor with great consideration, made him an allowance, and took him into his own house, where he lived on intimate terms with the first scholars and the best poets of the age. He studied from the frescoes of Masaccio in the Carmini and from the antique, and he did one original relief, known as "The

* This has been the generally accepted belief. Titian's birth is now placed, by some authorities, several years later, about 1490.

Centaurs," which is preserved in the Casa Buonarotti. It is a wonderful work for that of a mere boy, and is essentially more Michelangelesque in style than anything he did for some years afterwards. In the Casa Buonarotti is another work of these years, a bas-relief of the Madonna "in the style of Donatello."

Besides the influence of the poets and scholars of Lorenzo's brilliant court we must reckon with another influence that was brought to bear on Michelangelo at this period of his life, that of Savonarola. That it was profound and lasting there can be no doubt. Dante, the Bible, and the writings of Savonarola are said to have been his favourite reading and the subjects of his meditations in his old age. The Paganism and the Judaism which remain such prominent and conflicting elements in his art were thus developed in his nature during these early years.

Shortly after Lorenzo's death in 1492, Michelangelo returned to his father's house, where he carved a Hercules and a Crucifix,* both now lost. Then the first of those panics to which he was occasionally subject befell him, and he left Florence for the first time shortly before the fall of the Medici.

He did not remain long abroad, but was for a while at Bologna, where he carved one of the angels on the tomb of San Domenico. On his return to Florence he

*Prof. Henry Thode, of Heidelberg, believes he has recognised this early work of Michelangelo's in a crucifix still over the high altar of San Spirito, for which church it was executed.

did a statue of John Baptist, which is possibly that now in the Berlin Museum, and a sleeping Cupid, of which nothing certain is known, but which was, as the story goes, broken and stained and sold for an antique. This statue was the cause of his first going to Rome, where he was invited in 1496 by its purchaser, the Cardinal San Giorgio. During this visit to Rome he produced the "Bacchus," the "Pietà," (the only work he ever signed), and probably the unfinished "Cupid" in the South Kensington Museum. His reputation was now great and growing, and when he returned to Florence in 1501 he was overwhelmed with commissions, many of which were never executed. He was to have done twelve apostles, of which only one was even roughed out. He did do the "Bruges Madonna," two reliefs of Madonnas, never finished, and, finally, the great "David." He probably did another David in bronze, which has disappeared, and he found time also to paint the "Doni Madonna" which is in the Tribuna of the Uffizi. These works may be said to complete the list of those in his early manner. His next two works, the famous cartoon for the decoration of the Great Council Room in the Palazzo Vecchio, and the bronze statue of Pope Julius, are lost to us and we can form but an imperfect conception of them. The works which follow them are in a new and grander style.

In 1505 the new Pope, Julius II., called Michelangelo to Rome and proposed that he should erect a

huge mausoleum for the pontiff's own tomb. The "tragedy" of this tomb is too complicated to follow in detail. The work was interrupted, first for the colossal bronze statue of the Pope in Bologna, which was afterwards melted into cannon, and then for the painting of the Sistine. Contract after contract was made, only to be broken, and the tomb (a mere fragment of the original design) was not finally erected until 1545. The "Slaves" of the Louvre and several other figures, more or less unfinished, were originally intended for parts of this colossal design.

When the commission for the decoration of the ceiling of the Sistine was given him, in 1508, Michelangelo was the first of living sculptors. On the other hand he had done nothing in fresco and very little in painting of any sort. He was ardently interested in his gigantic scheme for the Julian tomb, and it is little to be wondered at that he objected to accepting this new task, and protested that painting was not his trade. When the first and better half of the work was shown to the public in 1509 he became at one bound the first painter of the day as well as the first sculptor, for Raphael, later his only rival, was then just beginning his work in Rome. There is indeed reason to believe that the view of this new masterpiece of decorative painting was largely instrumental in the formation of Raphael's new and broad Roman manner. Raphael, the most impressionable and least personal of great artists, could no

more resist this new revelation of the grand style in art than could the rest of the world. His work in the Stanza della Segnatura was begun about this time and finished in 1511, while the ceiling of the Sistine was finally completed in 1512. These two young men, of whom the elder was but thirty-seven and the younger but twenty-nine, had between them finally completed and ended the Renaissance as far as the school of form was concerned. Not they themselves, nor any other, could do so well again, and the only possible progress for painting, thenceforward, was in subordinating the search for the line and in following the Venetians into the study of light and colour.

It was many years before Michelangelo again painted anything which has survived, and his great central manner is represented in painting by this one example only. In sculpture it endured much longer. The fragments designed for the tomb of Julius are in this style, as is the "Christ" of the Minerva, and the Medici monuments in the Sacristy of San Lorenzo (1525-34) are his greatest achievements in marble.

The "Leda," painted about 1529, has disappeared, and with this one exception he painted nothing during twenty-three years, many of which were occupied with architecture and engineering to the exclusion even of sculpture. When in 1535 Pope Paul III. appointed him chief architect, painter, and sculptor of the Vatican, and set him to painting the "Last

Judgment," he was sixty years of age. The vast picture and the frescoes of the Pauline Chapel, painted between 1542 and 1549, are in his late manner, and very different from the works of his prime.

The last years of Michelangelo's life were taken up almost entirely with architecture. He was created architect of St. Peter's in 1547, and that and other buildings absorbed him more and more. A model for the great dome, his last masterpiece, was made in 1557, and the dome itself was completed, strictly on his plans, after his death. Everything else in the building was altered by his successors. He died in 1564 in the eighty-ninth year of his age, the most famous artist in the world; Titian alone, of the great men of his younger days, surviving him. His funeral was solemnised in the church of the Santi Apostoli at Rome with great pomp, but his nephew secretly conveyed his body to Florence, where it was buried in Santa Croce, and Vasari devotes many pages to the ceremonies held in his honour by the Academy of Florence. Monuments were erected to his memory in both churches.

In considering the personal character of Michelangelo it seems to me that sufficient importance has hardly been given to one fact. Condivi's statement, as translated by Symonds, is precise: "His prolonged habits of dissection" he says "injured his stomach to such an extent that he lost the power of

eating and drinking to any profit." If we consider Michelangelo as a confirmed dyspeptic from his youth up (for the greater part of his anatomical study must have been done in the early days at Florence), we shall perhaps have a key to much in his character. His moodiness, irascibility, and suspiciousness, as well as his constitutional melancholy and depression —characteristics strongly enough marked to lead Lombroso and others to consider him insane—may well have flowed from a disordered digestion. How marked these characteristics were, a hundred anecdotes show. His rages with his servants and his quarrels with his powerful patrons are well known. In such moments nothing restrained him, yet he was constitutionally timid. Here again we have the express testimony of his friend and pupil, Condivi, as well as that of his actions, notably his flight from Florence before the surrender of the city to Clement. He was, says Condivi, "as is usual with men of sedentary and contemplative habits, rather timorous than otherwise, except when he is roused by righteous anger to resent unjust injuries or wrongs done to himself or others, in which case he plucks up more spirit than those who are esteemed brave." His suspiciousness is best shown, perhaps, in the flaming letter of rebuke he wrote to his nephew Lionardo, who had hastened to Rome to see him in one of his illnesses, in which he accuses the young man of looking for his inheritance. In his habits he was abstemious

and almost miserly. Condivi says: "He has always been extremely temperate in living, using food more because it was necessary than for any pleasure he took in it, especially when he was engaged upon some great work; for then he usually confined himself to a piece of bread, which he ate in the middle of his labour. . . . And this abstemiousness in food he has practised in sleep also; for sleep, according to his own account, rarely suits his constitution, since he continually suffers from pains in the head during slumber, and any excessive amount of sleep deranges his stomach. While he was in full vigour, he generally went to bed with his clothes on, even to the tall boots, which he has always worn because of a chronic tendency to cramp, as well as for other reasons. At certain seasons he has kept these boots on for such a length of time that when he drew them off the skin came away together with the leather, like that of a sloughing snake." At one time he and his two assistants slept three in a bed. Yet he was most liberal to his family and friends, providing generously for the first, and giving the latter many priceless drawings and even statues which he could not be induced to sell. He was proud, and had a bitter tongue, and some of his caustic remarks are celebrated. He has been thought to have been envious in his disposition, but it may be said in his defence that a real artistic antipathy underlay most of his criticisms. The art of Raphael he was ill fitted to understand, and in the

case of the others whom he most savagely attacked I own to a strong sympathy with his point of view. Perugino and Francia are the chief of these, and to me it has always seemed that the tradesmanlike perfection and sweet insipidity of their work was a fair excuse for Michelangelo's dislike. On the other hand it should be remembered that he could praise as grandly as he could damn. His calling Ghiberti's gates "worthy to be the gates of Paradise" is a classic, but of Bramante, his personal enemy, he could speak as warmly, saying, "Bramante's talent as an architect was equal to that of any one from the times of the ancients until now."

He could not get on well with pupils or work with assistants, and though his influence was enormous he formed no true school. When he began the ceiling of the Sistine he engaged several fresco painters from Florence, but soon drove them away. He cannot have carried on the whole work single-handed, as the legend tells us, and there is no doubt that he must have had men under his direction, but mere workmen were all he could put up with. He worked by preference entirely alone, and often at night by the light of a candle fitted to a pasteboard visor on his head. He was at the antipodes of the serene craftsmen who knew their trade and could teach it. To him the incommunicable personal element was the essence of a work of art, and it were better that a work should go unfinished than that it should be finished in collabora-

tion with another. That he was profoundly melancholy his whole work, and particularly his sonnets, shows plainly. He was also profoundly religious. In his later years he made many drawings of the crucifixion and other subjects from the Passion of Christ, and he refused to receive any pay for his work on St. Peter's, giving his services for the good of his soul. He never married and, as far as we know, never loved, his friendship for Vittoria Colonna being the purely platonic love of an elderly man for an elderly woman. He was capable of much more enthusiastic and almost passionate affection for noble and beautiful young men.

In all these traits we see clearly, I think, the artist of the modern, personal, and emotional type; the man of nervous temperament, belonging to the *genus irritabile*, the artist who plays upon his soul and draws from it wondrous music; the man of the type of Rembrandt and of Beethoven. In a word, Michelangelo was a great *Romantic* genius.

I know of no more instructive comparison than that between this gloomy genius and his great rival and contemporary, Raphael. Raphael, who was everything that Michelangelo was not; Raphael, with his sunny nature, his troops of friends and his army of pupils; Raphael, with his marvellous achievement of pure beauty and his almost entire absence of personality; he who learned everything from others and yet did everything with a grace no other could com-

pass, and who taught others so well that their work is scarce to be distinguished from his own; whose pictures have no meanings but the obvious one, and no emotions but joy, and who was so careless of the personal touch that he could complacently see his design botched and mangled by his prentices so long as a palace wall was decorated: Raphael is the most perfect contrast conceivable to the solitary, melancholy Michelangelo, and as perfect a type of the classic temperament in art as the other is of the romantic. No wonder they could not understand or like each other. I know of but one parallel to this contrast of two great contemporaries, and it holds at all points, that between Rubens and Rembrandt.

With this knowledge of Michelangelo's personality let us take up the study of his art. We have already noticed that his production, exclusive of his architecture, of which I shall have little to say, falls into three periods marked by three distinct manners. The first of these periods, which extends, roughly speaking, from his fourteenth to his thirty-fourth year, may be called the realistic period; the second, extending from his thirty-fourth year to his sixtieth, may be called the period of style; while it would not be unjust to call the last period that of mannerism. It is notable that almost all the work of the first of these periods that has come down to us is in sculpture. There are but two pictures that are attributed to this

period of his life by good judges, and one of these is not certainly his. The "Doni Madonna" is undoubtedly by him, but it was painted well on toward the end of the period. The twenty years of his life in which he was learning his profession and mastering his tools were devoted almost exclusively to sculpture, and this fact set its mark deeply upon all his future production. Whether he were most painter or sculptor by nature, his training had made him a sculptor, and a sculptor he remained to the end of his life.

He began, as most artists do, by an imitation of what had gone before him. His first independent work, "The Centaurs," was indeed, as I have said, Michelangelesque in conception, and seems like a foretaste of his later work, and this resemblance is increased by the fact that the relief was never finished; but the relief of a Madonna, executed about the same time, was avowedly an imitation of Donatello. If the "John Baptist" in the Berlin Gallery be really by him, it is also an imitation of Donatello, with some faint marks of his own later manner, while the "Sleeping Cupid" must have been an intentional imitation of the antique. It was only after his first arrival in Rome that he began to do work of real importance, and the first statue he did there, the "Bacchus," is still not very original, and certainly not very good. The conception is his own, but the execution is rather in the vein of Græco-Roman sculpture of an inferior kind. Everything is round

and puffily modelled, without accent and without charm. It had in its day and still has a great renown, yet if he had done nothing else his fame would scarcely have endured. It is in the "Pietà," the "Madonna of Bruges," and the "David" that we shall find the real Michelangelo of the first period, and as the "Madonna of Bruges" is neither so well known nor so significant as the other two, it is to them that we may best devote our attention.

It is important to note here that Michelangelo was born too late to continue the direct tradition of Renaissance sculpture. The time of his birth was, as we have seen, the time of the highest activity in painting immediately preceding the culmination of the art, but sculpture was in the Italian Renaissance, as it has usually been in the history of the world, at least a century in advance of painting. Sculpture had already reached a point of perfection with Donatello and Ghiberti which it was difficult to equal and in some respects impossible to excel, and Donatello had died, an old man, eight years before Michelangelo was born. The decadence had already begun, and Michelangelo may be said to have stood alone, the one great sculptor of his age, not the continuer of a great school. His master was a pupil of Donatello's, and may have imparted to him some of the Donatellesque traditions, but the influence of Donatello, which is visible in some of the details of his work, in the type of the heads and the arrangement

of the draperies, is rather like the influence of an old master upon a modern than like that of a teacher upon his immediate pupil. Later he must have been greatly influenced by a study of the works of Jacopo della Quercia. The subtle technique of the older school, with its delicate modelling and half-relief, he neither understood nor practised. There is no hinting at partially revealed forms in these early works of Michelangelo—everything is pushed to the extreme of realisation, and the surface is searched to its utmost cranny and polished like glass. The dead Christ of the "Pietà" is perhaps the most wonderful piece of purely realistic sculpture in existence, every vein and cord and muscle studied with the science of an anatomist and the eagerness of a student determined to master fact once for all. There is already more stylistic convention in the "David," but there is still much realism of an elevated sort in the conception. The heavy head and big hands of a half-grown boy look odd on this gigantic scale, but they are only a part of the naturalism of the whole. These figures are the work of a student—surely the most wonderful student that ever lived—but still a student learning truth, not yet a supreme master expressing feeling. It is worth noting in passing—I shall have more to say of this peculiarity presently—that the heads of the two figures in the "Pietà" are entirely insignificant, while that of the "David" is a conventionalised and somewhat vulgarised version of Donatello's "St.

George." To the period of noble naturalism belongs the "Doni Madonna," and to it also must have belonged, from what we know of it, the lost cartoon of the "Battle of Pisa." It is not merely that the praises that have come down to us speak only of its realism—that might be the fault of the critics—but the fragmentary copies of it that remain seem to show us nothing else than a great piece of study, or rather a final demonstration of mastery. Once and for all the master proclaimed to the world his absolute science, his perfect knowledge of anatomy, his ability to draw every conceivable attitude, every possible movement, every difficult foreshortening of the human figure. To test and to display his acquirements—the performance had no other object than this. It was an achievement easy to understand and to applaud, and it was, perhaps, more admired and studied than anything else its author ever did. It was the school of the young artists of Florence, and Vasari and Cellini, neither of whom could comprehend the poet in their master, exalted this as his greatest work.

This long and intense study of natural fact completed and perfect mastery finally attained, Michelangelo had now to show what he meant to do with his knowledge. The time for self-expression had come, and the opportunity came with it. As a sculptor the commission for the decoration of the Sistine ceiling was not grateful to him, yet it is the only one

of his vast schemes that was ever carried out as he planned it. There can be little doubt that he enjoyed invention more than execution, and he was constantly planning monumental schemes which could be carried out, in sculpture, only by that collaboration with others of which he was incapable. The more rapid art of painting has made it possible for us to know what such a Michelangelesque scheme of decoration might be like; and, sculptor as he was, this great work of painting is perhaps the highest and most complete expression his genius ever found. How essentially he remained a sculptor, however, even in his painting, a slight study is sufficient to demonstrate. There is not a composition nor a part of a composition in all this series that is not capable of treatment in bas-relief, while the isolated figures of prophets and sibyls would make admirable statues. The compositions are all on one plane in the true sculptural style—indeed without nearly the scope of perspective and pictorial effect that Ghiberti allowed himself in his reliefs—and landscape, ornament, variety of texture in stuffs are entirely absent. The figure, and nothing but the figure, nude or draped, but treated always from the point of view of pure form—that is all that he deigned to give us. Something of the same temper had been shown by Luca Signorelli in his frescoes at Orvieto, only a few years before, but by no one else.

But the sculptor turned painter found a new inspiration in his new work. The patient labour, the

intense study of detail, the determination to realise to the utmost, were no longer possible. The surface to be covered is estimated at 10,000 square feet and the design is said to contain 343 figures. All the conditions of the work rendered the close study of nature impossible, and this host of figures could be done at all only in virtue of a system and a convention. They were necessarily painted from more or less slight sketches and indications, and the artist was forced to rely upon his vast store of accumulated knowledge and to find a style and a type which thenceforth dominated his work. Add to this the stimulus which these subjects from the Old Testament gave to his deeply poetic and religious mind, and we can begin to understand the result. He had studied the human figure until he knew it by heart, as few men, perhaps no man, has ever known it, and now, set free from the slow toil of cutting and polishing, set free from the dominating presence of the model, brooding upon the mighty myth of the Creation and the Fall of Man and filled with the spirit of the ancient prophets, he set to work to *invent*.

The grandeur and majesty of these frescoes is so supreme that a cold analysis of them seems almost an impertinence. They are the highest expression of sublimity in all pictorial art. Yet as one cannot hope to express the grandeur of this grand style of Michelangelo's, one may be pardoned for trying to express some other things about it.

Let us first note, then, that as yet this grandeur is by no means incompatible with beauty. The figures are systematically enlarged and idealised in a special way until they become colossal, rugged, titanic—primæval powers rather than human beings—but they are beautiful colossi. The thorax of the "Adam" is enormous and the arms are superbly muscular, but besides the suggestion of gigantic strength there is a grace and suavity of line that render him only less beautiful than the "Ilissus" of the Parthenon. The female figures are idealised in precisely the same way as the male, and for the same reason—to fit them to carry the weight of thought Michelangelo placed upon them.

There is no commoner criticism of Michelangelo than that he was insensible to feminine beauty—and indeed the sweetness of Raphael or the charm of Correggio would be as out of place in these austere and solemn visions as Perugino's smiling landscapes or Angelico's painted wings and patterned draperies. Michelangelo's women are true mates for his men—grandly thewed and heavy-limbed—but they are nevertheless intensely feminine. The "Eve," mighty mother of the race though she be, is wonderfully lovely, while the "Libyan Sibyl"—she who, turning sidewise, lifts an open book in her outstretched arms and shows her face in profile over her herculean shoulder—is one of the most graciously, nobly, and winningly feminine presences in all art. We are not

of the race of these giants; if we were, it is such giantesses that we should love—giantesses that are not less but more feminine for being framed on the great scale of those huge things that loved before the Flood.

We have all heard of Michelangelo as a master of drawing, and we have all heard that he was no colourist. The greatest of draughtsmen he undoubtedly was, but let us not imagine that mere "good drawing"—mere accuracy of shapes and sizes and the "placing" of joints and muscles—is what distinguishes him. His figures are often faulty in proportion, impossible in action, and exaggerated in outline; but every line of them is full of intelligence, of knowledge, of meaning, and of style—full of art and of the incommunicable, inexplicable something which is the artist's mind. This is what all great drawing is, and it is a very different thing from "good drawing." Any one who understands Michelangelo's work at all will know what he meant when he said that Titian could not draw, and yet Titian was often more correct in his measurements and proportions than Michelangelo himself.

So also the statement that Michelangelo was no colourist must be taken with a condition. He was not a colourist in the sense that Titian was a colourist, or Rubens; he was not a colourist as are those artists for whom colour is the chief means of expression and whose poetry is in their palettes. Splendour and rich-

MICHELANGELO: "LIBYAN SYBIL"

ness and mystery were not his. Romanticist though he was, his is the art of form, and the cold light of the sculptor's workshop is ever about him. Yet two of the foremost artists of our own day, both of them powerful colourists, George Frederick Watts and our own John LaFarge, have recently expressed their admiration for the mastery of colour, within the limits he had set for himself, shown by Michelangelo in these frescoes, and have testified to the perfect and appropriate harmony of their pale tints.

After the completion of the Sistine ceiling Michelangelo turned again to sculpture, and the Julian tomb and the tombs of the Medici occupied all of his middle life that he was suffered to devote to pure art. But the sculpture which he now produced was very different from that of his early period. For good or evil his Michelangelesque manner was formed and his type of the human figure established. The exaggerated bulk of the chest, the enormously enlarged and muscular arms, the large hands and small feet, the comparatively small legs, and, in particular, the lower leg greatly shortened in proportion to the long thigh —these have become permanent elements of his work from which he is never again to free himself. Just why some of these conventions were adopted must always remain a mystery. In some strange way they answered the needs of his mind and served for the expression of his thought. Other parts of his system are more explicable, but at any rate his treatment of

the figure had become a system, and the epoch of close study of nature (an epoch through which every great individual artist must pass) was forever closed.

Besides this fixing of his scheme of the human figure there are other great changes which separate the Michelangelo of the "Slaves" and the Medici tombs from the Michelangelo of the "Pietà" and the "David." The most sculpturesque of painters has become the most picturesque of sculptors, and his work in marble is henceforth dependent for its effect, more than that of any other sculptor of high rank, upon light and shade and, in many of the most impressive examples, upon incompletion. There are several reasons why it will be well, in considering the sculpture of Michelangelo's great middle period, to confine ourselves to the Medician tombs in the Sacristy of San Lorenzo. In the first place they are, by universal consent, his grandest and most impressive work. In the second place they constitute the only series of statues by him which are seen together, in the situation for which he intended them, and with the lighting which he himself arranged. The Julian monument was finally entirely altered from its original design and placed in another church than that for which it was intended, while the fragments originally meant for its decoration are widely scattered. In many cases it is impossible to tell whether certain figures were or were not parts of its composition. In the Sacristy of San Lorenzo

Michelangelo was architect as well as sculptor. The setting was made for the statues, and while the design, as he originally conceived it, was never carried out in its entirety, what there is of it is to be seen to-day very nearly as he meant it to be seen.

No person, at all impressionable by art, who has ever stood in that chapel is likely to forget his emotion. Nothing in the whole range of art is so overwhelming, so crushing, so "intolerable." Its enormous melancholy catches one by the throat and chokes one with the poignancy of the sensation. One gazes with a hushed intensity, one cannot tear oneself away, and yet one breathes a long sigh of relief when one gets out at last into the sunlit air of Florence. It is only long afterward, and in cold blood, that one can analyse the impression that one has received; and then one is surprised to find how large a part of it is due to the artfully arranged lighting and to the unfinished state of the statues. In this analysis one is much helped by the study of casts. Full-sized casts of these groups are to be found in the museums, but they are seldom lighted as Michelangelo lighted the originals. There are also, in our art-schools, small-sized casts of them, the origin of which is doubtful. Whether the originals of them, preserved in Florence, are Michelangelo's studies for the full-sized figures or are copies by another hand is a question I shall not undertake to decide. At any rate they

are *completed*, and do not show the unfinish of the marbles, and they thus become extraordinarily useful as materials for the study of Michelangelo's methods. From the study of these casts, large and small, one soon becomes aware of the extraordinary importance of light and shade and of incompletion as elements in the total effect of Michelangelo's greatest work in sculpture. Placed anyhow or anywhere, and no matter how lighted, the figures from the pediment of the Parthenon still remain the same serenely, incomparably perfect embodiment of majesty and beauty. Not so with the personal, romantic sculpture of the master of the Renaissance. Take the "Lorenzo de'Medici" from his niche and place him in a plain side light and, together with the brooding shadow of his helmet upon his face, half his mysterious dignity has vanished and he seems almost commonplace. Disengage the face of the "Day" from its stony mask and its strange horror has evaporated. The "Evening" is entirely enveloped in a veil of unremoved marble, and seems verily to breathe the solemn mystery of twilight. Complete him and he is a middle-aged athlete in repose. What is left is the Michelangelo that his science and his training had made him, the academic master of anatomy who epitomised the learning of the Renaissance, the decorator whose pompous forms and writhing limbs already foreshadow the epoch of Rococo; but the personal element, the poetry of the man, is gone.

Now, that the lighting was intentional there can be no manner of doubt, but about the lack of finish there has always been, and perhaps always will be, much discussion. It is certain that Michelangelo was constantly called away from one task to have another imposed upon him, and it is probable that he sometimes deserted a statue because of veinings in the marble or because his impetuous chisel had bitten too deeply into the stone. But it does not seem to me possible that both these causes together can account for the singular fact that there is hardly a statue by him in existence, later in date than the "David," that is finished throughout by his own hand. The "Moses" is nearly, but not quite, finished, and we know that it was one of the earliest of the figures intended for the Julian tomb; the "Christ" of the Minerva was botched by a journeyman, and the head, hands, and feet were ruined; the greater number remain, as he left them, more or less unfinished. Many of his early works were also left incompleted, and this before the dragging hither and thither had begun. There must have been other causes in the nature of the man for this peculiarity, and one of them he gives us frankly himself. "He could never content himself with anything that he did," says Vasari. "Nay, Michelangelo would often remark that if he were compelled really to satisfy himself in the works to be produced, he should give little or nothing to public view."

It is notable that the parts most frequently left unfinished are the head and the hands, and this recalls the remark I have already made about the insignificance of type in the heads of much of his early work. In his drawings the head is often omitted entirely or indicated only by a scrawl. As an anatomist he undoubtedly felt that, structurally, the head is of less importance than anything else in the figure, having the smallest influence in determining the action and movement; and it was of least importance to him artistically also, for the whole scheme of his art was based upon the expression of the nude figure. When he did take the pains to do a head it was a grand sculpturesque abstraction of anatomical forms based on the same principles as his ideal of the body. He is almost the only modern artist who has left nothing resembling a portrait. His finished statues have rather expressionless masks than human faces, and he may well have felt that it mattered little, the attitude once established, who finished the head, or whether or not it was finished at all.

More than this, however, it is impossible to suppose that Michelangelo was himself insensible to that strange charm which is so visible to all of us in his unfinished work that it has recently become the fashion to seek for it deliberately and to plan for it in the clay. He was continually striving to infuse into sculpture meanings and thoughts which it was not meant to express and could not hold. His

deep poetic spirit tried to express itself through the medium of the most simple, classical and formal of the arts, and he was unaided by the delicate technical methods of the earlier sculptors of the Renaissance, which he never understood. What more natural than that he should have found the sentiment evaporating as the work advanced, and should have, half despairingly, left to the unfinish of the sketch the suggestion of things which the cold completeness of the finished marble could never convey? He "could not content himself," and his statues remain more impressive in their incompletion than the finished works of any other modern.

When the old man again took up painting his invention had stiffened and his poetic fervour was frosted, while the age of naturalistic study was long past. The "Last Judgment" as an exhibition of acquired knowledge is stupendous, but in it manner has become mannerism, and the grandiose is inflated to pomposity. It has little or no real feeling, its colour (what is left of it after the tinkering of the "breeches maker") is harsh and unpleasant, and its writhing and foreshortened figures are swelled into monstrous bulk while they are posed in attitudes hardly possible to the supple frames of adolescents. Of the still later frescoes of the Pauline chapel it is scarce charitable to speak. Every trace of real greatness is gone from them and they seem mere rant and mouthing. The master himself said, "I

shall do regrettable things," and he was right. The worst of his intolerable imitators could do nothing worse than these pages of windy and empty rhetoric.

Of Michelangelo the architect I am not qualified to speak. In painting, in sculpture, and in architecture Michelangelo was largely responsible for the form which was taken by the decadence, but it would be pushing a point too far to hold him responsible for the decadence itself. When a thing is ripe there is nothing for it but to rot, and the decadence would have come at any rate. It is the peculiar good and ill fortune of those who come at the supreme moment of perfect ripeness, that they leave behind them an unsurpassable glory, while they are held accountable by some for the corruption that follows. In the history of the arts of form Michelangelo and Raphael, romanticist and classicist, occupy together this peculiar eminence, and from them flow two streams which pervaded the decadence, one freezing into the icy stateliness of the academic, the other boiling up into the turgid declamation of the Baroque. The greater the personal force of an artist the deadlier, generally speaking, is his influence, for the men of greatest personality are the men of greatest faults and greatest virtues, and their faults are imitable while their virtues are not. If the works of Michelangelo were all destroyed and we could judge of his power only by the attractive and

destructive influence which he exercised upon his successors, we should still be justified in supposing that the force which had been so profoundly felt must have been that of one of the greatest artists of any country and of all time.

THE PICTURES OF VENICE

THE pictures of the great Venetians are scattered through all the galleries of Europe, and some of these painters may be studied better almost anywhere else than at home. Others you can hardly understand until you have gone to Venice to see them, and these notes, made long ago upon the spot, show how some of the pictures of Venice struck a painter who cared more for their essential quality as art than for their importance in other ways.

First of all, then, the earlier men, the Vivarini and the rest, and even Gentile Bellini and the much-lauded Carpaccio, have little beyond a historical interest. Carpaccio's St. Ursula series is an entertaining picture-book, full of historical costumes and "documents" for the reconstruction of a past Venice, but it is quite artless and childlike in both composition and drawing, and not very remarkable in colour; and the traveller who follows Mr. Ruskin's advice and spends much time in reverential study of it, is likely to hinder his growth in any real appreciation of what painting is. The first seriously considerable artist of the school is Giovanni Bellini, and he holds his own well. There is no lovelier piece of early Renaissance work, of the somewhat hard and thinly painted kind,

than the "Frari Madonna"; and the steady, strong growth in breadth and power and fulness shown in his other two capital pieces in Venice, the "Madonna of San Zaccaria" and the "Saints Jerome, Christopher and Augustine" of San Giovanni Crisostomo, is truly wonderful. They are badly lighted, and the former can be seen to advantage only in the late afternoon, when the westering sun floods the church and lights up its dark corners, but they are noble works of art, and, for the moment, almost incline one to accept Dürer's dictum that Bellini was, in his old age, "still the best painter of them all." The quality of most of the Titians here aids one to feel this. But though Bellini is a fine painter, even here there are reservations to make, and it is distinctly *not* true that, as Ruskin has said, "John Bellini . . . united in equal and magnificent measures justness of drawing, nobleness of colouring, and perfect manliness of treatment with the purest religious feeling." "Justness of drawing," even at his best, he had not. His Madonnas' faces are still enthralled by the Byzantine ideal, and, if sweet, are feeble; even his more portrait-like accessory heads are thoroughly well drawn only when in profile, and his attempts at foreshortening are distinctly bad; while his treatment of the nude, as in the St. Sebastian of the large picture in the Academy, or the St. Christopher in the picture mentioned above, is meagre and primitive. The numerous works by

him in the Academy are nearly all second-rate and need not detain us.

Destructive criticism has almost reduced Giorgione to a myth, and there is little in Venice to help one to a belief in him. The "Soldier and Gypsy," in the Palazzo Giovanelli, is inaccessible, and the "Apollo and Daphne" in the Seminario Patriarcale, which is said to be "genuine but retouched," is certainly greatly inferior to many of the pictures now taken from him. Whether it is his or not, the unapproachable "Partie Champêtre" of the Louvre remains the loveliest of the Giorgionesque visions, and, together with a few noble portraits, gives us our clearest notion of what Giorgione's influence meant to the development of painting.

And now we come to the greatest name in Venetian art and to the greatest disappointment of Venice. In Venice one has to hold with both hands to the memory of the splendid portraits, the wonderful small canvases, the single nude figures, that one has seen elsewhere, to retain one's respect and veneration for the name of Titian. He has only one great canvas in the Ducal Palace, for which I am inclined to be thankful, but the churches are full of his altar pieces, and they are almost all of them pompous and uninteresting and (let me risk the word) mediocre. Many of the lesser men show better than he. Palma's "Santa Barbara" is better than almost any of the Titians here, and Bonifazio and Paris Bordone and

Pordenone and even Lorenzo Lotto are often more interesting. His "Doge Grimani" not only shows "want of feeling and coarseness of conception," as Ruskin very justly remarks, but is badly composed and not well painted, and is quite unpleasant in colour. His "Assumption," in the Belle Arti, is usually labelled his masterpiece. It is theatrical in its arrangement; the figures are common in type and (several of them) badly drawn; the colour is bright, with the brightness of stained glass, thin, and lacking in quality. Tintoretto's "Miracle of St. Mark," which hangs near it, eclipses it utterly. Some of the nude baby bodies are adorably painted, and in them only does Titian show himself. It is so with picture after picture. From the early "St. Mark" in the Salute, much bewhiskered and surrounded by stumpy, big-headed saints, to the melancholy mouldiness of the Pietà in the Academy, his last work, of which the colour and texture resemble nothing but old cheese, there is hardly a really fine work—hardly one that is *felt*—that seems painted with conviction. The "Peter Martyr," which must have been a great picture, is gone, but the "St. Lawrence" is here, and the "Annunciation" in San Salvatore, and the "Presentation of the Virgin," and "San Giovanni Elemosinario"; and the guide-books give long quotations about them from Crowe and Cavalcaselle, in which all the adjectives are exhausted in the effort to convey an idea of their transcendent grandeur and

beauty. The tourist looks and wonders and tries to admire, and doesn't, and imagines that art is a strange sealed book. The "Presentation" is flat and hard and commonplace, and the others are grimy and brown and woolly, and commonplace too.

One is almost tempted, finally, to wonder if it is not Titian's very mediocrity which has contributed to the universal acceptance of his work and the overwhelming dominance of his name. No; Titian was unquestionably a very great painter, and even in Venice one may see it occasionally. The "Pesaro Madonna" is a fine picture, and there is one other even finer. But the "Pesaro Madonna" might seem nearly as cold and pompous as some of the others were it not for the portraits, which save it; and when one's eye lights on the little head in the corner—is it a boy's or a young woman's, that fair head with its mild, steady glance and the white silk sleeve and shoulder telling so finely against the flesh?—one has surprised Titian's secret. He was purely a painter, and above all a portraitist, and his heart was not in these big canvases, painted because altar pieces were in demand. It is not lack of "religious feeling" that makes them inferior—he probably had as much as Veronese, who is superb—but lack of decorative feeling. Instead of regretting that Titian was employed so much in painting portraits of kings and emperors or easel-pictures for their cabinets, what we should regret is that he was ever employed at any-

thing else. He was the greatest of portrait-painters and of the painters of the nude. Give him a limited space and a model, and he is unsurpassable. But his grand "machines," his *tableaux d'apparat*, are mostly failures. In the Scuola di San Rocco, on the staircase, high over a door and nearly invisible, is a little picture of two figures not over half life-size, an "Annunciation," which is the one Titian in Venice to which the much-abused word "masterpiece" might be fairly applied. It is badly dried in and somewhat browned, but, fortunately, has never attracted the attention of the restorer. It is a pity that it cannot be taken down and cautiously, *most* cautiously, cleaned and placed in a good light somewhere. It is one of the loveliest and most delightful pictures I know. I got up on a ladder and studied it, close to, at my leisure. This is Titian, Titian at his best, the absolute painter—as charming in sentiment as it is consummate in quiet mastery of execution; and nothing else in Venice seems quite as perfect as this.

Perhaps the strangest genius in the roll of great artists is Tintoretto. A great genius he unquestionably was, yet no other great painter sinks so low. If Titian is often mediocre, Tintoretto is often, perhaps most often, downright bad—bad with a thorough, uncompromising badness that is surprising. His bad pictures are at once vulgar in conception, sprawling and disorganised in composition, lumpy and exaggerated or actually feeble in drawing, insuffer-

ably careless in execution, and black, dirty, and unpleasant in colour. And the very worst of his bad pictures are collected together in that shrine where the faithful flock of Mr. Ruskin goes to worship, the Scuola di San Rocco. His Baedeker tells the tourist that the Tintorettos in San Giorgio Maggiore are "daubs redounding to the painter's everlasting shame"; why should it print, as approving, Mr. Ruskin's statement that the worse daubs of the Scuola make it "one of the three most precious buildings in Italy," bracketing it with the Sistine Chapel; and that "whatever . . . the traveller may miss in Venice" he should give *it* "unembarrassed attention and unbroken time"? I believe that, with the exception of the little Titian mentioned above, there is scarcely a picture in the Scuola di San Rocco that has any value other than as an awful warning, or that is worth five minutes of the time of any one but the professed critic and historian of art.

The first thing that strikes one about these pictures is that they are in the most wretched state of preservation—or rather of *un*preservation. The blues have faded to ashy whiteness, and the other tints have blackened, until any merit they may have possessed is lost forever. They are mere wrecks, and they are not wrecks of great pictures. They never can have been anything but scrawled and hasty sketches painted like the scenery of a small theatre. Neither do I find them more powerful or interesting in con-

ception than in execution. The "Massacre of the Innocents" is about as interesting as an average Salon picture. The Madonna of the "Annunciation" is inconceivably coarse in type and careless in execution, and the cataract of cherubs rushing over the transom is theatrical rather than dramatic. As for the wonderful meanings which Mr. Ruskin has found in these pictures, one can account for them only on the ground that the pictures are so dim and black that one can fancy anything in them. He sees in the "Baptism" a multitude of the heavenly host seated upon the clouds, and beneath, in the calm sky, Christ carried away by the Spirit to the temptation in the wilderness. In reality Tintoretto painted a group of human spectators on the river bank, and below them is nothing but the reflection of the sky in the water. But it is useless to go on. Only remark that I do not except even "The Crucifixion," Tintoretto's "masterpiece," from the indictment. It is slightly better than the others, but only slightly. It has all the faults of the Baroque in architecture and sculpture, and one is puzzled to understand how that hater of the Baroque, Mr. Ruskin, should admire it in painting.

There are many more bad Tintorettos in Venice, but we may pass them by and occupy ourselves with the good ones, which are in considerable numbers, too, fortunately, and which are almost as astonishingly good as the bad ones are bad—so good as to leave

one wondering how the painter who was capable of such work could ever have been guilty of the others. One is not only puzzled, but exasperated by the man. Perhaps the best of them all is the "Pallas Driving away Mars" in the Anticollegio of the Ducal Palace. Tintoretto has four smallish pictures in this room which *are*, if you like, masterpieces. The "Bacchus and Ariadne" is the best known, and is, in part, superb, but the figure of Ariadne has faded and lost its glazes, and is clay-coloured and cold. Her head can never have been anything but characterless, and it is only the floating figure that is of Tintoretto's very best. How shall one describe the "Pallas and Mars"? Titian plus Correggio is as near to its formula as one can come, but there is much in it that is neither Titian nor Correggio, and which no one but Tintoretto could have done. The fulness and glow of colour is Titian at his best, but Titian with a difference—Titian inclining to the blue and green of the scale and away from the red and yellow. The richness of light and shade, the glow of the lovely knees and rounded arms, and the transparent depths of shadow, are like Correggio, but a Correggio of more daring invention and shorn of the affectations and prettinesses adored of school-girls. The lithe suppleness of full-muscled form, the adorable distinction of the delicately poised heads, with their shining braids of golden-brown hair, the firm hands, with their square-ended fingers—these are Tintoretto, and none

TINTORETTO: "PALLAS DRIVING AWAY MARS"

other; one of the first painters of all time when he took the time to be so.

There are two other Tintorettos in the Ducal Palace that no lover of painting should fail to see, "Saints Jerome and Andrew" and "Saints Lewis, Margaret and George with the Dragon," in the antichamber of the chapel. They are high up over doors, of the quiet, gray type of Tintoretto's work, and might pass unnoticed, but they are masterly in every touch, and show, perhaps, more colourist's power in their grayness than many a gorgeous Titian. This style of colouring in a subdued half-tint of grayish quality, neither golden nor silvery nor black, was one in which Tintoretto did much of his best work; witness the "Crucifixion" in San Cassiano—a noble picture and infinitely superior to the "Crucifixion" of the Scuola di San Rocco. The "Paradiso" is "the largest oil painting in the world," and, for me, that is almost its only distinction. It is not very bad, but it is too big to be very good. Probably no one else could have done it so well, but no one could hold a picture of that size together, or paint that vast concourse of figures with more than occasional felicity. The other Tintorettos in the Ducal Palace are of varying degrees of badness almost to the very worst.

At the Madonna dell' Orto are the two big and turbulent compositions of "The Last Judgment" and "The Golden Calf," wonderful in their way, but not

beautiful; the "Presentation," attributed by some to Domenico Tintoretto, of which one half is magnificent and the other intolerable; and, smaller than these, but still a large picture, "The Miracle of St. Agnes." This, even more than the "Marriage in Cana" at the Salute, though that too is a superlatively fine picture, especially in its row of female heads, is an example of Tintoretto's marvellous power over light and shade. It is held together like a small Rembrandt, and has as much depth and luminosity and sense of values, with finer colour. The composition is dignified and the types are noble, and the only fault to be found in it is in its upper portion, where the flight of kicking, blue angels reminds us a little too much of the painter's capricious moments. Finally, there is the astonishing "Miracle of St. Mark" at the Academy, which is quite unlike any other Tintoretto or any other Italian picture that I know of. It is not without its faults; occasionally the drawing is careless and more often turgid; and, while the colour is brilliant and gorgeous in the highest degree, the tone is not as perfect, the unity not quite as thorough, as in some of his quieter canvases. What distinguishes it particularly and places it among the world's great masterpieces is its amazing virtuosity. It seems to have been painted throughout *alla prima*—at one jet—with no underpainting and very little glazing, in a method more suggestive of Rubens or Hals than of any Italian work. The handling is less flowing and

slippery than with Rubens, less abrupt and chippy than with Hals; the tone is more full and transparent than with Velasquez; but the instantaneous touch, the economy of means, the marvellous precision, place him with these three as one of the unapproachable technicians—one of the few who have made the mere material endlessly delightful to the lover of painting. The broad modelling of the nude, foreshortened body of the slave, with its impasted lights sliding imperceptibly into its thinly rubbed shadows, the extraordinarily living head of the old man at the left (said to be the master himself), painted with a few sharp, countable, yet liquid touches; the magnificent sweep of the brush as it places the lights in the mass of drapery on the back of the executioner and unerringly models the brawny forms beneath; the painting, with three or four flowing strokes apiece, of the broken implements in the foreground—these things, added to a feeling for style and grandeur of form truly Italian, and a colour-sense as truly Venetian in its richness, make this picture a "miracle" indeed. How *could* its author have been guilty of the shameless scurrying of the Scuola?

Before leaving Tintoretto, let me record a small discovery of my own which may not be without interest. In the Museo Civico there are two small canvases, between two and three feet high, which are either sketches for or copies of "The Last Judgment" and "The Golden Calf," it doesn't matter

which. Looking at these, I was struck with a curious identity between two figures, one in either picture. It was not at all the identity of two figures copied from the same drawing, but the identity of a statue seen from two different points of view. One figure is nearly upright, flying upward and seen from the back; the other is falling head first and strongly foreshortened; but the relative positions of the limbs, the turn of the head on the shoulders, the peculiar angle of the feet, are unmistakably the same. On further looking I found a third figure in which the same pose occurred, drawn from still a third point of view and with an alteration of the action of one arm. There is a well-known story of how Tintoretto studied foreshortening and light and shade by means of small wax models hung up by threads in different positions and in different lights. Here was the proof of the story, and I felt that I had caught the painter in the act. He had used the same *maquette* twice, if not three times, in composing these two pictures, and with a result so different, pictorially, that only accident disclosed the fact.

As for the greatest painter of them all, in my opinion, Veronese,—triumphant in Venice as he is everywhere—another of these essays is devoted entirely to him, and I may omit him here. After two hundred years a sort of bastard son was born to him. Tiepolo is of the eighteenth century, is Rococo; he is *coquet* rather than sumptuous, amus-

ing and immensely clever rather than grand; but one feels that the blood of the great decorator is running in his veins. In the "Antony and Cleopatra" of the Palazzo Labia there is a more wilful resemblance to Veronese than elsewhere, an attempt at his pomp of arrangement, and an imitation of his costumes. It is remarkably able, but perhaps less individual and less charming than others of his works. The great ceilings of the Gesuiti and the Pietà are Tiepolo pure and simple. Nothing of the eighteenth century is so characteristic of the epoch, or, in its way, so fine. Tiepolo is as delightful as Watteau or Boucher, while enough of the old Venetian glory hangs about him to make him greatly their superior in power. His great breadths of sky, with masses of cool or dun-coloured clouds, perfect in harmony of tone; his audaciously foreshortened angels, with their long, elegant legs hanging out of swathes of voluminous drapery; the creamy light of a naked breast or shoulder, and the floating half-tint that obscures a graceful arm; the pale colouring of the whole relieved by an occasional snapping black—these make up a ravishing operatic heaven, a sort of celestial ballet. In the ceilings of the Scuola dei Carmini he seems even more delightfully impudent. One imagines a conclave of devout Carmelite monks gazing aloft in spiritual meditation at decorations that seem made only for the boudoir of a powdered marquise of undoubtful reputation—at a St. Agnes, type of

innocence, with her lamb, too innocent to know that her voluminous skirts cover neither her legs nor her breast—at rollicking she-angels soaring overhead in complete carelessness of the laws of perspective—and one is lost in wonder and admiration at that preposterous century. Tiepolo had an enormous talent. His knowledge is prodigious, and his audacity equal to anything. He lacks only a certain gravity and largeness—the magnificent seriousness of the great painters—to rank among the greatest. He is the last of the old masters, and the cleverest of the moderns.

VERONESE

NONE of the great masters of painting has been so little or so inadequately written of as Paul Veronese. In these days of exhaustive monographs no one seems to have thought it worth while to collect the facts of his life or to examine and catalogue his works; and even in books of general art history or art criticism, where he must, perforce, be mentioned, he has rarely received the attention he deserves. He is apt to be brought in a poor third or fourth, after the other great Venetians are done with, and dismissed by the critics with half-hearted praise or a bare acknowledgment that he "shows as yet no trace of the approaching period of decline," and "maintains the best traditions of his school." The painters, indeed, have known him for what he was, and have shown their appreciation, now and then, in passages of glowing praise; and Ruskin, if he did not altogether understand him, yet felt his power; but his art still awaits an authoritative exposition. Its very sanity and simplicity is one of the reasons for this, and its magnificent and rounded completeness is another. Its qualities seem too obvious to need explanation, and there are no enigmas in it to attract the readers of riddles, no recondite allusions or strange ways of telling old stories; it is all straight-

forward, unaffected painter's work, and the literary hunter of meanings finds little there to his purpose. Also, the world loves a specialist, and the critic who is enamoured of line writes of Botticelli, while he who cares most for light and shade devotes himself to Rembrandt. To be too well poised is dangerous; to have too many good qualities is to run some risk of getting little credit for any of them.

The world loves a specialist, and it is very loath to believe in the existence of anything else. Because Titian was a colourist many people can remain blind to the extraordinary power of design which the rudest wood-cut after one of his great pictures should reveal to them; Michelangelo was a draughtsman, and it is only after four hundred years that we are beginning to understand that the painter of the Sistine ceiling was, after his fashion, a master of colour. Veronese was long ago comfortably labelled "Decorator," and, aided by an inadequate conception of decoration, the world has imagined that he was nothing else, and has treated him much as if he were another Pintoricchio—a man who could, indeed, embellish a palace wall with splendid colour, but whose other artistic qualities were comparatively negligible.

No such thorough study of the art of Veronese as is to be desired could be made in this short essay, even had I the knowledge necessary to attempt it. I can deal with only a few of the great paintings he produced with such astonishing profusion, and, precisely

because his position as a great decorator is universally acknowledged, I shall deal with them, at first, as pictures, and as if they had no more specifically decorative purpose than that common to all great works of art.

Like most of the greatest painters, Veronese was a master of portraiture, and his pictures are full of portraits, identified or unidentified. Not all the figures in the great "Marriage in Cana" of the Louvre may be correctly named by tradition, though there can be little doubt as to the group of painters, including Titian, Tintoretto, and himself, who provide the music for the feast, but the other figures are none the less portraits because we may not know who sat for them. No one but a great portrait painter could have painted that stout, clean-shaven old man in the smaller "Marriage in Cana," at Dresden, or the hawk-like profile of the man behind who drinks from a shallow glass. The wife and daughter of Darius in the National Gallery picture are evidently portraits, and charming ones, while half the "Supper at Emmaus" in the Louvre, and two-thirds of the "Cuccina Family before the Madonna" at Dresden, are made up of professed portrait groups. The principal figure in the latter group, robust and matronly as becomes the mother of many children, her still comely head brought out by the white robe of Faith, who stands directly behind her, and made the centre around which the lines of the composition circle, seems to me one of

a mantle of shot silk with every half-tone and every shadow right in depth and in colour, and every fold true to the shape which the texture of the material gives it, and he will do it with the fewest possible touches, yet with no ostentation of cleverness. He will paint you armour, or jewels, or gold and silver plate, with the same ease and the same perfection, and he will cover with such things a canvas thirty feet long without haste as without fatigue. For sheer profusion and abundance there has been no one like him save Rubens, and Rubens had not his taste or his reticence. They are splendid figures that throng the canvases of the master of Antwerp, but they seem splendid barbarians beside the grave citizens of the most cultivated city in Europe.

All the Venetian painters were landscapists, and Veronese not less so than the others, though his landscape is different in quality. Of the greater Venetians only Tintoretto was Venetian born, but the town-bred Veronese looked at nature differently from Giorgio of Castelfranco or Titian of Cadore. He had a fine sense of the growth of trees, and the plumy massiveness of his foliage is superb, but he cared little for wild scenery and seldom introduced a mountain in his distances. He could do whatever he chose, and so, when the subject demanded it, he could paint a hill fortress or a bit of sea-shore, as in the several versions of the "Europa," but by choice he seldom strays far into the country, and one of the most complete of his

landscapes is the background of "The Finding of Moses," at Dresden, with its evident reminiscence of his native town upon the Adige. In general the elements of his landscape are architecture and sky—the landscape of cities—and no one has ever painted them so beautifully as he. Architecture plays an important part in almost every one of his pictures, from the columns which separate the heavenly from the earthly personages in the "Cuccina Family" to the grand setting of the great "Marriage in Cana." Even in the "Europa" he could not get on without a pyramid. In one of the ceiling panels of the Ducal Palace, though this is executed, likely enough, by a pupil, there is a literal representation of the Campanile of San Marco that is the likest thing to the real Venice of anything I know in painting. In general Veronese's architecture is more ideal, and I cannot say how far it may satisfy an architect in its structure and design, but its exquisite lightness and the justness with which its silvery colour relieves against the sky is beyond praise. To the sky itself he gave more variety and truth of form, I think, than any painter of his time, and a beauty of colour not to be excelled. His white towers and thronged balconies against the blue were never built in actual stone, but there is more of the spirit and beauty of Venice in them than any of her children have given us, or any of the countless artists that have since haunted her silent streets.

But it is, after all, in the large treatment of light and the unity of tone maintained throughout a vast composition that Veronese is most the landscape-painter, and as these great canvases of his are filled with figures, it may almost be said that he is never so much the landscapist as in the painting of men and women. Each of his countless figures may have all the vitality of a portrait, each may be robed in splendid garments, perfectly rendered, but each will have its exact amount of light from the sky upon it, its exact distance marked from objects in front of or beyond it, its due amount of atmosphere enveloping it. His colour can be deep and resonant on occasion, but it has not the twilight glow or stained-glass brilliancy of Titian; rather it has the silvery clearness of open daylight. He is fond of the play of light and shade, and uses cast shadows with almost the rich fantasy of Tintoretto, but there is never a space of obscurity in his pictures, never a hint of blackness; the light penetrates the deepest nooks and reverberates from corner to corner, and everywhere falls upon some definite object having a definite place. I know no other painter who, making the figure his principal subject and working on a monumental scale, has so nearly realised our modern ideal of the painting of natural light.

So far of Veronese's naturalism in depicting the life he saw about him, of his almost unequalled power and veracity as a mere painter. But he was far more than

a painter of the pageant of life; he was a great painter of noble and heroic themes—a master of figure painting in the grand Italian manner. He was a draughtsman, a stylist, and a man of true and lofty feeling. In mastery of drawing he had no equal in Venice, unless it were Tintoretto, and no superior anywhere except one or two of the greatest Florentines. Now and then he is careless, or perhaps his pupils intervened; and there is a kind of meagreness in the attachment of the wrist which is a frequent failing; but there is no difficult foreshortening into which he cannot throw the figure, no line he cannot make it take, and this with an entire absence of posturing or the Michelangelesque affectations of Tintoretto. Rather there is a large simplicity of gesture, one might almost say a divine awkwardness, which is inimitable. His men are superbly muscled, his women of the full-fleshed Venetian type, white and soft, with adorable golden heads, but with a firmness of line and modelling that is almost Greek. The attendants of Europa are nearly as grand as the women of Pheidias, while in the figure of Pharaoh's daughter, in "The Finding of Moses," he has combined a magnificent amplitude with an elegance prophetic of the eighteenth century. Always and everywhere his drawing has style, and his naturalism is never trivial or commonplace.

His range of subject and treatment is wide. In "The Finding of Moses" he is gay and familiar, in the "Europa" luxuriantly idyllic, while he can rise to

great dignity and even to tragedy. He has all the Venetian sensuousness, but he never sinks to coarseness, as Titian sometimes does; he can be solemn and, to my feeling, profoundly religious, but he is never morbid or sentimental. Grave or playful, he is always manly, always serene, a great, frank, healthy, broad-minded, tender spirit. One feels that he was not only a genius one must admire, but a man one could have loved, and I know of few painters who awaken the kind of personal affection that Veronese inspires. Perhaps of all his qualities that with which he has been least often credited, since the day he was brought before the Inquisition on a charge of irreverence, is the possession or expression of religious emotion; yet I have always found his "Supper at Emmaus," with its family group at the side, one of the truest and most touching of religious pictures. To his broad charity neither the unconscious children nor the pet dogs were out of place in the presence of the Saviour, and the head of the Saviour himself is, with that of Rembrandt's in his picture of the same subject, the most nearly satisfactory in art. If Rembrandt has painted for us the "Man of Sorrows," Veronese has come near to giving us the God; if Rembrandt's Christ, who has been dead and is alive, gives us the thrill of the supernatural, Veronese's has about him some glory of the superhuman.

Perhaps no single picture by Veronese shows so many of his great qualities in such perfection as the

glorious "Martyrdom of Saint George" in the Church of San Giorgio in Braida in Verona—a picture comparatively little known, yet worthy of a high place among the world's greatest masterpieces, both for nobility of conception and perfection of execution. To the left is the statue of Apollo, to the right an officer on a great horse; between them, stripped to the waist, kneels the saint surrounded by guards. An aged priest stoops over him and points to the idol he is asked to worship; behind him, bare-armed and ready, the executioner leans upon his two-handed sword; but the saint pays no attention to either of them, for above him the heavens are opened and he sees the Madonna between Peter and Paul, the Theological Virtues, and a multitude of angels, making triumphal music. Faith intercedes for him, Hope looks down with encouragement, and between heaven and earth a cherub dashes headlong toward him bearing the martyr's crown and palm. He is no ascetic and no dreamer, this saint, but full-blooded, black-bearded, a man and a soldier, and this is his last and greatest victory. Lest by any chance you should miss the significance of it, the wings of the palm-bearing cherub, which alone unite the two halves of the picture, are almost black and cut sharp against the luminous sky—the most conspicuous dark in the composition.

The craftsmanship of this great painting is in every way worthy of its intellectual content. In drawing, in characterisation, in vigour of handling, it is Veronese

at his best, but it is most wonderful, perhaps, in its treatment of colour. The lower, or earthly, part of it is full and rich, approaching nearer than is common with Veronese to Titian's sombre splendour, but with a greater frankness of individual hue, the blue and red of the saint's garments approaching the purity of the absolute pigment. The upper part, though as firmly drawn and as completely modelled as the lower, is painted in the tones of sky—an opalescence of delicate tints that, without any sacrifice of realisation, without a hint of vagueness, yet transforms it into a heavenly vision. Here, if ever, the harmonies of the palette may claim a place with those of poetry and music; here, if ever, the art of painting has proved its right to be considered a great intellectual and emotional art. The picture is a splendid hymn of triumph, and the triumph is no less that of the painter than of the saint.

So far we have been considering the art of Veronese without special reference to its decorative purpose, and yet the instinct that has caused him to be called a decorator is a perfectly sound one. A decorator he was primarily, and the great intellectual and technical qualities we have been studying are, after all, only the equipment of the greatest of decorators. If, however, he could make all these things subservient to a decorative end, and could include in a thoroughly successful decoration so much which we have thought it necessary to eliminate, it is evident that there must

be something wrong, or too limited, in our ideas of decoration. We have thought that respect for the flatness of the wall demanded of us the elimination of modelling and of light and shade, and here is a man who models perfectly and plays with cast shadows, and yet never loses the flatness of his wall. We have thought that decoration demanded the sacrifice of realism, yet here is a great decorator who is one of the greatest of naturalists. Does it not behoove those who are interested in the revival of decorative painting in this country to consult this master as to what are, in reality, the essentials of his art?

In this country our notions of decoration have been largely influenced by the great prestige of that true artist, Puvis de Chavannes, and we have, perhaps, too often forgotten that the peculiarities of his style are partly temperamental, partly conditioned on the destination of his best works for buildings of an austere and colourless type. In the Panthéon his paintings are admirably appropriate and successful, but in the more sumptuous setting of the Boston Public Library, surrounded by rich marbles, his compositions, noble as they are in themselves, always strike me as a little cold and thin. It is perhaps because others have felt this, and because the architecture our painters are called upon to decorate is often of precious material and richly ornamented, that another style has grown up, partly Byzantine, partly influenced by Pintoricchio—a style depending on bright colours and gilding,

and even on the application of ornaments in relief—a style more brilliant and splendid, but, as it seems to me, unnecessarily archaic. In such a setting of sumptuous architecture as Veronese worked for we may safely employ Veronese's realisation and fulness of modelling if we can learn to employ it as he did. What keeps his work unfailingly decorative is, first of all, design, and then, not the elimination, but the subordination of light and shade and modelling.

This subordination Veronese acomplished in an exceedingly subtle manner. He models completely, but with infinite refinement of delicate light and shade, and he never allows his light and shadow to break up the broad local colour of an object or to disguise its outline. A red drapery remains definitely red, a white one definitely white, through all its modifications, and tells as a simple mass of a certain shape, clearly separable by the eye from all other masses of different colour, its boundaries apparent at a glance. This treatment is caused in part by that feeling for breadth of natural light already dwelt on, but its result is that every element in his picture is as visibly part of a great pattern of coloured spaces, bounded by beautiful and interesting lines, as with the most shadeless of the primitives. The very perfection of science has attained a result which had before been conditioned on its absence, and with the utmost realisation in the parts the picture as a whole achieves true decorative flatness.

There is nothing which so accents the extent and

unity of a surface as the sense that it has been used for the display of a linear design, and it is in his mastery of design that Veronese is most consummately the decorator. In linear composition he has been surpassed by no one but Raphael, if even by him, yet it is this element of his art—perhaps the most important of all—that has been least recognised. His colour is so entrancing, his execution is so superlative, his individual figures are so delightful, that the attention is distracted, as it was meant to be, from the plan on which everything is arranged. His personages move so naturally, are so intent on the business in hand, that it is hard to believe that each contour of their bodies, each fold of their draperies, has been carefully arranged to play its part in a rigidly established scheme of line. Even his pupils did not understand his system of composition, and the pictures painted after his death by those who called themselves his "heirs" are even more markedly inferior to the real works of Veronese in design than in execution. They are filled with figures imitated from the types of the master, but spotted here and there, without order, until the canvas is full; and they might be cut off anywhere and sold by the yard with no serious harm done. Every genuine picture of Veronese is an organised whole; and the larger the canvas, the greater the number of figures it contains, the more formal and symmetrical, as a rule, is the arrangement. At the risk of some dryness, there-

fore, and of calling attention to what was meant to be felt rather than seen, it becomes necessary to analyse his methods.

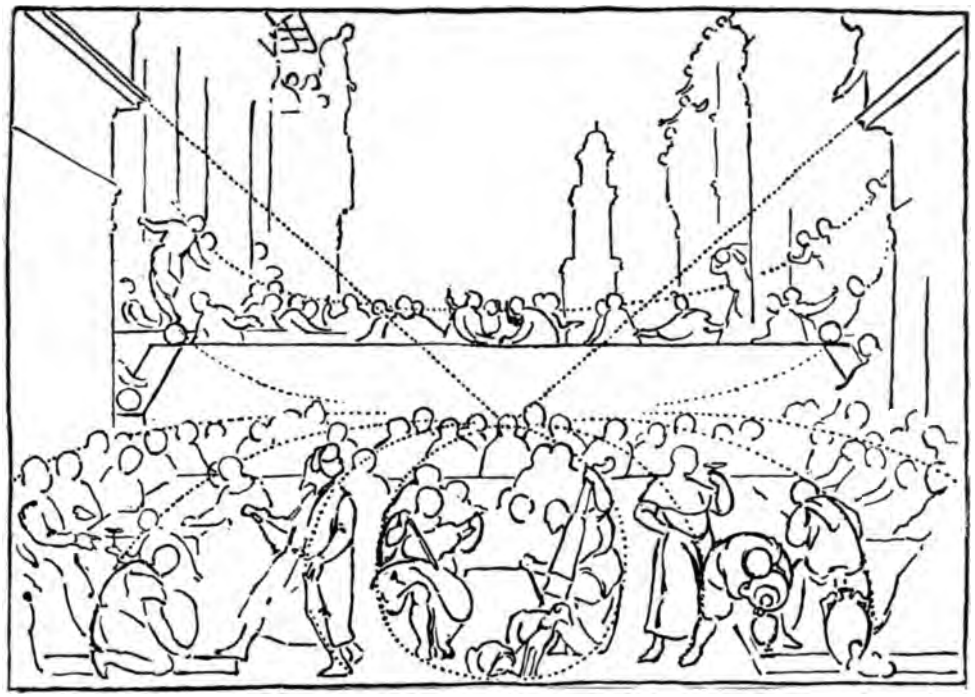
Like all true decorators, Veronese habitually composed in breadth rather than in depth. His principal figures are arranged nearly on one plane or are drawn as if seen from so great a distance that perspective differences are minimised, so that all are nearly of the same size. There will, likely enough, be subordinate figures in the background, but these also will be arranged on a plane parallel with the first, and there will be no connecting links between the two sets of figures and no lines leading into the picture. Generally there is no distance, the background being cut off by an architectural screen, so that while the room decorated is enlarged to the imagination, it is enlarged to a limited and measurable degree, and the sense of space is as carefully circumscribed as it is suggested. Look, for instance, at the way the figures are strung out across the canvas in the "Alexander and the Family of Darius," or in the smaller "Marriage in Cana," and at the absence, in the latter, of any difference in size between the figures on the two sides of the table and the sudden and marked diminution of the distant figures. In this case there is a third plane, still farther away, but there are almost no transitions. This principle Veronese observed, to some extent, even in his ceilings, where he was more willing to break through the surface of his picture, and he never ob-

serves it more entirely in spirit than in the great "Marriage in Cana," where the exigencies of his task seem to cause him to disregard it. Here the canvas was too vast, especially in its vertical dimension, to admit of his favourite arrangement. It was necessary to place the horizon higher than usual, and to throw the principal figures farther back in order to get height. This the artist has done, but in doing so he has deliberately falsified his perspective, making use of a number of different vanishing-points in order to avoid too great a convergence of lines and to diminish the difference in size between the nearer and farther figures; while he has made a sudden diminution of scale in the figures on the balcony, which is maintained, nearly unaltered, in those on the housetops beyond.

Still, there was some danger that the figure of the Christ might be lost in the crowd of subordinate figures. Veronese has, therefore, placed his head exactly at the theoretical point of sight, and, while he has made most of his perspective lines vanish where he pleased, he has seen to it that the two most conspicuous of them, those of the cornices on either side, should point true. More important, however, are the lines traced by the positions and attitudes of the figures themselves. See how the background figures are arranged in a long, drooping curve, as of a necklace, of which the head of Christ should be the pendant; note how they are played about into groups of two and three, how their arms are so disposed as to

echo and re-echo this falling curve; above all, how the figures at either extremity begin another, and lower, curve, which points directly to the head of Christ; you will find in this part of the picture alone, and on a much larger scale, all the science of the composition of Leonardo's "Last Supper." But the lower part of the picture is still more wonderful. The falling curve is still echoed, even to the corners, and many of these subordinate lines are, as it were, suspended from the centre; but the principal lines are a series crossing these—a series of convex curves made up of this man's head and that man's back or arm, and answering to each other on either side of the canvas with almost rigid symmetry, although the objects which trace them are constantly varied. Every smallest object in the great picture either forms a part of this system of curves, or sympathises with it, or subtly contrasts it, and you could not change so much as a feather in a cap or the collar on a dog without harm to the whole; and, wherever your eye is first attracted, one of these lines leads it imperceptibly but surely to that small head in the centre, and fixes it there. That head dominates some six hundred square feet of canvas, and, after a time, you can see nothing else.

No other of Veronese's pictures affords so astonishing an example of his power of design as this, but almost any of them might be analysed in a similar way. The garlanded curves occur again and again, notably in the "St. George," "The Cuccina Family" and



COMPOSITION OF VERONESE'S: "MARRIAGE IN CANA"

the smaller "Marriage in Cana." In this last the compositional centre is shifted to one side, and the right-hand end of the canvas is a sort of foil to the symmetrical group which fills two-thirds of it. The extreme of picturesque fantasy and informality is reached in the "Finding of Moses"—a painting of no great size and in a lighter vein; but even here the irregularity is more apparent than real, and the same care is taken to insure the dominance of the most important figure. It is only another kind of science that is displayed—the quantity is the same.

There is much more that might and should be said of the art of Veronese, but we have now cursorily examined it in every aspect, and have found him armed at all points, equipped with almost every quality of art. For a thorough and adequate knowledge of every part of his profession it would be impossible to name his equal, and if respect for the achievement in one or another direction of this or that mighty artist forbids us to call him the greatest of masters, we may yet, with assurance, proclaim him the completest master of the art of painting that ever lived.

DÜRER

DÜRER is, unquestionably, one of the dozen great artists of modern times, yet of all the great artists that ever lived he is perhaps the least specially artistic in temper. A man who became, not merely a painter, but one of the greatest of painters, yet of whom it may be said that the painter in him was the smallest part of him, is certainly worthy of careful study as a curiosity of human nature, if for nothing else. His artistic productions have been studied again and again, and are likely to be studied while the world lasts, but his writings have also been subjected to careful examination. Every scrap of them that has been preserved to us seems to have been deciphered—letters and journals and notes written upon the margins of drawings, as well as his professed treatises upon art and engineering—and the whole collated and compared with scrupulous care in the effort to throw some light upon his nature, his ideas, and his methods of work.

Albrecht Dürer was born on the 21st day of May, 1471, and died on the 6th of April, 1528. His life therefore covered the flowering time of the Italian Renaissance, and he outlived Raphael eight years.

Titian and Giorgione he may have known. On the other hand, we know that he met Quentin Matsys (who was about eleven years his senior) at Antwerp. With Holbein he represents about all there is of the Renaissance in Germany, but Holbein was his junior by twenty-six years. The mere names and dates show how slowly the Renaissance crept northward, but Dürer's work shows it better still. M. Édouard Fétis, in his Catalogue of the Royal Museum at Brussels, fixes the line of demarcation between the primitive schools and the modern more than a hundred years later in the north than in Italy, and places Holbein himself among the primitives. Whether or not he belongs to this category, Dürer certainly does; yet, in many ways, Dürer was the Renaissance incarnate.

His writings show him to us successively from several points of view. First, we have the man Dürer, the burgher of Nürnberg, steady, hard-working, honest, careful of his pfennigs, sharp at a bargain, rather fretful and discontented in disposition, and a trifle vain, knowing his merit and not averse to speaking of it, a pious son, but a not particularly loving husband. His letters to Jacob Heller about the famous altar-piece he painted for him are almost comic in their insistent effort to screw an extra hundred florins from his unwilling patron. He returns to the charge again and again, tells him that he has used "none but the best colours he could

get," and has "painted upon it more than twenty-four florins' worth of them." In another letter it becomes "twenty-five florins' worth of ultra-marine" alone. He will never undertake such a job again for double the money, and even at the extra price he will be out of pocket by the bargain. Finally (and this is often repeated), he is already offered more for the picture than he asks, which, he goes on, "would have done very nicely for me had I not preferred to please and serve you by sending you the picture. For I value the keeping of your friendship at more than 100 florins. *I would also rather have this painting at Frankfurt than anywhere else in all Germany.*" That this was the real point with him, is shown by his saying in another letter, "It will be seen by many artists, who perhaps will let you know whether it is masterly or bad." One is glad to know that he got his money.

His father and mother he speaks of always with reverence and love, but he scarce ever mentions his wife, except to record occasionally, "I dined once with my wife," in that strange journal of his famous journey to Antwerp, in which he mingles accounts of the honours showered upon him with items of "4 pf. for bread," and near the end of which he makes the characteristic statement: "In all my doings, spendings, sales, and other dealings, in all my connections with high and low, I have suffered loss in the Netherlands."

Next we have Dürer as the religious reformer, and here there are some curious contrasts to be observed, though they are not really so strange as they seem. If Dürer, while still going to confession and praying to the "Mother of God," puts Popes and Cardinals among the damned in his illustrations of the Apocalypse, he does no more than did many mediæval artists whose Catholicism has never been questioned. His placing there also the Emperor and Empress shows what he meant—that the wicked, however high placed in this world, will have due punishment meted out to them in the world to come. Mediæval art and literature are full of ridicule of the vices and abuses of the clergy long before the *doctrines* of Romanism were questioned. Later, indeed, Dürer seems to have fallen much under the influence of Luther, and to have been deeply stirred by religious thought. There are passages in his writings which may fairly be called mystical, and others that seem to come from a religious zealot. Such is his famous apostrophe to Erasmus: "Oh, Erasmus of Rotterdam, where wilt thou stop? Behold how the wicked tyranny of wordly power, the might of darkness, prevails. Hear, thou knight of Christ! Ride on by the side of the Lord Jesus. Guard the truth. Attain the martyr's crown." Yet he was no gloomy fanatic, but, like Luther himself, loved *Wein, Weib, und Gesang*. His accounts contain frequent mention of money lost at play, and he freely jests with his

friends about their mistresses. In fact, in his relations to religion, as in many other things, Dürer fully and fairly represented the Germany of his day, somewhat gross and materialistic in its pleasures, yet capable of serious thought and of deep emotion; clinging to the beliefs and outward forms of its old religion, yet determined to reform abuses and to rebel against Papal despotism. He was no longer a Roman Catholic, but he was hardly a Protestant.

If in his daily life and in his religion Dürer was the representative of the Germany of his day, in his wide curiosity, his thirst for new knowledge, the range of his learning and experiment, he was the representative of the Renaissance itself. Nothing in the way of information came amiss to his inquiring mind. He took a trip to Zeeland, apparently to see a stranded whale. He has left a careful drawing of a walrus. He scrupulously recorded all prodigies that came in his way or that he could hear of through friends. He was deeply interested in geometry, architecture, and music, was an inventor in fortification, thought much upon perspective without mastering its principles, and wrote treatises upon the measurement of the human figure. It is recorded that "Melanchthon used to say of him that, though he excelled in the art of painting, it was the least of his accomplishments," and, referring to a dispute between Dürer and Pirkheimer, he confessed, with a certain naïveté, "his astonishment at the ingenuity

and power manifested by a painter in arguing with a man of Pirkheimer's renown."

The comparison with Leonardo da Vinci, that great contemporary of Dürer's, who, more than any other man, represented the many-sidedness of the Renaissance, is here forced upon one. Of Leonardo, also, it might have been said by a contemporary, that painting "was the least of his accomplishments," though no contemporary was likely to express surprise at his "ingenuity and power" in argument. Leonardo also was musician, architect, engineer, and author. His celebrated letter to Sforza, in which painting is placed last among the things he could do "as well as any man," is well known. Leonardo also theorised upon the proper proportions of the human figure, and one of his studies of a nude man drawn within a circle and a square seems to have been identical in idea with a couple of Dürer's. In this instance both took their idea from Vitruvius. The resemblances between the two men were thus manifold, and it is interesting to know that the German may have come, indirectly, under the influence of the great Italian during his stay in Italy. Between them, however, there is a difference so wide that it alone is greater than the many resemblances. Leonardo was an Italian, with the Italian love for beauty, while Dürer was a German, with the German reverence for fact.

Dürer's theory on the measurement of the human

body was peculiar, and merits some attention. It was, briefly, that as every individual varies from the typical man in a way peculiar to himself, these peculiar variations will, in an infinite series of measurements, counteract and nullify each other, and the *type* will be disengaged. His ideal man was a sort of composite photograph of all existing men—the "average man" in the literal sense. It was not man "as he ought to be," as Raphael said he painted him, but man as he *is*, individual peculiarities excepted. The result of the theory is curiously shown in his measured drawings of the foot, in which elaborate diagrams are given for ascertaining the exact inward inclination of the great toe caused by the modern shoe! He was himself aware that his own observations were insufficient in number, and proposed his canon only as an approximation to the final one. In a draught for the introduction of that comprehensive work (never written) in which he intended to "Set down all that I have learned in practice, which is likely to be of use in painting," he says: "I do not highly extol the proportions I here set down, albeit I do not believe them to be the worst. Moreover, I do not lay them down as beyond improvement, but that thou mayest search out and discover some better method by their help."

But this temper of experiment did not last. He had an almost superstitious reverence for numbers and measurements as in themselves holy and beauti-

ful, and he had the theorising mind which must reduce everything to some system, however arbitrary. The sketched plan for his great work is like an old sermon with its divisions and subdivisions. It was to be in three divisions; each division was to be in three parts, and each of these was to be again divided into six smaller parts. The scheme was evidently made out with little regard to the contents and for the sake of its own symmetry, and it would have strained his ingenuity to fill out the frame he had made for himself. As an instance take Division III., Part B; "The second part shows how such a wonderful artist should charge highly for his art, and that no money is too much for it, seeing that it is divine and true; in six ways"! This theorising and systematising spirit lays hold upon his measurements, and we soon find ourselves in a nightmarish maze of geometrical rules for modifying all the proportions in the same degree by "Words of Difference," so as to produce thin or thick, short or long figures; of men "ten heads high," and similar monstrosities. Finally, in a letter to Pirkheimer about the preface which the latter had agreed to write for the "Four Books of Human Proportions," he is reduced to say: "I neither will nor can give any better reason for all the proportions set down in the whole book and in the sequel—why I make them so and not otherwise—save that in fact I do so make them."

Leonardo's strong sense of beauty saved him from

the disastrous effects of such vagaries. Dürer's sense of beauty was slight, and when he was not dominated by his model he fell into woful error. Of one of his Madonna figures, Sir Martin Conway has said: "It is not human. It is a painted theory; a coloured proposition." But let Dürer the theoriser speculate as he might, Dürer the painter was a realist with a tenacious grip on facts. When constructing an "ideal" Virgin, he failed. Let us be thankful that, for the most part, his imitative instinct got the better of his idealising mind, and that his life was spent in drawing the portraits of the very real men and women of his time.

I have said "Dürer the painter," but a painter, in the stricter sense, he never was. To paint is to represent upon a flat surface the visual aspects of things: Dürer's idea of painting was the delineation upon such a surface of all the ascertainable facts about things. A picture was a sort of geometrical projection of nature. To him effect was unknown, and mystery would have seemed falsification, light and shade was only a means of securing roundness, and colour was only known as local colour—an added fact about the object painted. This man, who was working in Venice while Giorgione was painting the Fondaco de' Tedeschi, was as a painter more primitive than Jan Van Eyck, and two-thirds of the art of painting was undreamed of by him. By early training he was a goldsmith, by choice an engraver,

and the qualities on which he prided himself were exceeding minuteness in detail and an engraver-like sureness of hand. He is explicit about finish. "These things," he says, "should be wrought in the work to the clearest and carefullest finish, and even the tiniest wrinkles and details should not be omitted in so far as it is possible." He adds, to be sure, "though it is useless to overdo and overload a thing"; but it is said that it was impossible for him to finish a picture to his own satisfaction. With regard to his sureness of hand, there is an anecdote in Camararius's preface to his Latin translation of the "Books of Human Proportions" which is worth quoting entire for the light it throws upon Dürer and his methods:

"I cannot forbear to tell, in this place, the story of what happened between him and Giovanni Bellini. Bellini had the highest reputation as a painter at Venice, and, indeed, throughout all Italy. When Albrecht was there, he easily became intimate with him, and both artists naturally began to show one another specimens of their skill. Albrecht frankly admired and made much of all Bellini's works. Bellini also candidly expressed his admiration of various features of Albrecht's skill, and particularly the fineness and delicacy with which he drew hairs. It chanced one day that they were talking about art, and when their conversation was done, Bellini said: 'Will you be so kind, Albrecht, as to gratify a friend

in a small matter?' 'You shall soon see,' says Albrecht, 'if you will ask of me anything I can do for you.' Then says Bellini: 'I want you to make me a present of one of the brushes with which you draw hairs.' Dürer at once produced several, just like other brushes, and, in fact, of the kind Bellini himself used, and told him to choose those he liked best, or take them all if he would. But Bellini, thinking he was misunderstood, said: "No, I don't mean these, but the ones with which you draw several hairs with one stroke; they must be rather spread out and more divided, otherwise, in a long sweep, such regularity of curvature and distance could not be preserved.' 'I use no other than these,' says Albrecht, 'and to prove it, you may watch me.' Then, taking up one of the same brushes, he drew some very long wavy tresses, such as women generally wear, in the most regular order and symmetry. Bellini looked on wondering, and afterwards confessed to many that no human being could have convinced him by report of the truth which he had seen with his own eyes."

Dürer was by nature and by training an engraver, it was by engraving that he expressed himself most freely and fully, and it is on his engraved work that his reputation does and must mainly rest. But even in his chosen art the art itself was secondary to him. Art is good because it "is employed in the service of the Church," because it "preserveth the like-

DÜRER: "MELENCOLIA"

ness of men after their death," because, "by aid of delineations, the measurements of the earth, the waters, and the stars are better to be understood; and many things likewise become known unto men by them." Art is with him an aid to devotion, a vehicle of thought, a record of fact; but art for art's sake found no favour in his eyes. Pure beauty of line moved him little more than beauty of light and shade or colour, but accuracy and expressiveness were everything to him. The accessories in his plates might serve to-day as working drawings for a cabinet-maker, so carefully is the construction made out, and in his landscapes every tree in twenty miles of country is plainly drawn. And as art was to him a vehicle of thought or a record of fact, so he could never pack enough thought or enough fact into a plate. Breadth, simplicity, concentration, the eliminating of many small facts to present some great fact more clearly—the suppression of all secondary ideas that the dominant idea may be more directly expressed—these things were quite foreign to his temper. Consider his two great plates, the "Melencolia" and the "Knight and Death," and remark how every corner, every quarter-inch of space, is crammed with meanings. He had so much to say, apparently, that he could not afford to waste any room. No quiet masses, as a relief to the eye, for him; no space is so small that some object may not be crowded into it which will add to the thought

or at least to the realisation of facts. And all these objects must be most clearly drawn and with the utmost minuteness. All the intricate detail of a tool or a mathematical instrument must be so marked that there can be no doubt about its use and structure. Nay, what is a pebbly bank but a collection of individual pebbles, each of which has its form as sacred as that of a mountain? An engraving, so treated, becomes a kind of puzzle that one may pore over for hours, still finding something new to consider, and the drawing of a wrinkled face is as intricate as the map of a continent.

All this is very far from the purely artistic temper. It is rather the endless curiosity of the man of science or the deep pondering of the man of thought. What is it, then, that has placed among the immortals of art this man who was so little of an artist, so much of everything else? Is it not, perhaps, his profound sympathy with the spirit of his age? With Dürer it is not so much his art which has preserved its contents as the contents which still interest us in his art. It is not so much Dürer's language that we care for (a language which is rather antiquated now), as it is his thought; and that thought interests because Dürer was, in his own person, his age and country embodied. His many-sided mind embraced every interest of his many-sided epoch, and he was, more than any of his contemporaries, the *representative man*. We have said that Dürer and Holbein were together almost all there

was of the German Renaissance in art, but it might almost be said that Dürer *was* the German Renaissance. The art of Holbein is rather Dutch than German in its essential quality, and of many of the problems of his time he seems to have been serenely innocent. He was a wonderful portrait-painting animal, and went on painting superb portraits to the end, little worried by anything else; and, though the better painter, he was in some ways the smaller man. Dürer laid hold upon his age at all points, and therefore, for us, the Germany of the Renaissance and the Reformation, the Germany of Luther, Melanchthon, and Holbein, is, above all, the Germany of Albrecht Dürer.

RUBENS

THE difference in the amount of recorded fact concerning the two greatest artists of the seventeenth century (or, rather, two of the three greatest—for Velasquez should be admitted to the trio) is characteristic of the profound contrast between the men themselves. They were not in the strictest sense contemporaries, Rubens being nearly thirty years older than Rembrandt; but much of their best work was produced in the same years. Peter Paul Rubens, Knight, Secretary to His Majesty's Privy Council, and Gentleman of the Household of Her Serene Highness the Princess Isabella, the most famous artist of the age and one of the finest gentlemen of Europe, died in 1640, leaving a fortune to his family, who spent a thousand florins on his funeral. At that time Rembrandt was still enjoying something of that brief local popularity which seems never to have reached as far as Antwerp; but, twenty-nine years later, he died in poverty and obscurity, a broken-down old bankrupt, and was buried at a cost of thirteen florins. Owing to the indiscretions of his father, Rubens was born in a period of eclipse for his family, and the place of his birth was long doubtful. These doubts have now

been dispelled, and the rest of his life is as open as the sunlight. He was an accomplished scholar, a man of great personal charm, the friend and companion of princes. He rode the finest horses, wore the most magnificent clothes, and married the most beautiful women. About the solitary Rembrandt grew up a fantastic legend of mingled debauchery and avarice, and it is not yet known whether the serving-wench who was the mother of his surviving children ever became his wife. Rubens had as many pupils as Raphael, and relied as much on their collaboration; Rembrandt seems to have been hardly more able than Michelangelo to utilise the work of others.

In all these points we seem to see the eternal contrast between the two great types of artist, the Classic and the Romantic. The Romantic artist is intensely personal, intensely poetic, occupied solely with self-expression. The virtue of his work is something that he alone can give it, and he has no use for the hand of another. The Classic artist is engaged in the clear and perfect expression of the ideals of all the world. His work is not so much different from others as it is better, and he generally cares so little for the personal note that he is quite willing that the inferior execution of a pupil should have its place in the work, if only the work be accomplished. The great Romantic artist is generally misunderstood by his contemporaries, as was even Michelangelo, and is rarely materially successful. The

great Classic artist is the delight of his time and is covered with honours and rewards, though his fame sometimes suffers an eclipse in the next age. Rembrandt was one of the greatest Romantic painters of all time; Rubens was the great Classic artist of his epoch. Between them stands Velasquez, the Naturalist, neither Romantic and poetic nor Classical and decorative, a pure painter, "*le peintre le plus peintre qui fut jamais.*"

To-day we find Rubens often coarse and vulgar, and we are apt to think of him as a ruddy giant, and of his art as a magnificent display of animal strength. It seems to us much more Flemish than universal, more realistic than ideal. To call this *beau sabreur* of the brush, Delacroix's hero and Ingres's devil, a Classicist, may seem to savour of paradox, yet a Classicist he essentially was: a Classicist of the seventeenth century and translated into Flemish, yet one who embodied the ideals of his time almost as perfectly as Raphael did those of the high Renaissance in Italy. The faults of Rubens's work are much less individual—much less national, even—than we are apt to think. He was admired even in Italy, and if he was the favourite artist of the King of Spain and of the Italian Queen Regent of France, it was because his art pleased them as it pleased his own countrymen. He was, like Raphael, a humanist, and, like Raphael, an eclectic. The allegory, the pomposity, the exaggeration, and the bad taste of his pictures mark equally the litera-

ture, the architecture, and the sculpture of his contemporaries. It was the time of elaborate conceits and long-winded Latin, of the Jesuit churches, and of the Cavaliere Bernini. Rubens was born one hundred years after the date usually assigned to the birth of Titian, and one year after Titian's death. The Venetians had remade the art of painting and the school of line was dead. His Flemish nature might have made a colourist of him in any case; though it did not save some of the Italianates, his predecessors; but an art which was to satisfy the ideals of Europe in the seventeenth century had to be an art of colour. Rubens's worship of flesh is little greater than Titian's and his female types, though less severely drawn, are not more gross than many of the latter's. An artist who greatly influenced Rubens during his stay in Italy was Federigo Barocci, whose use of exaggerated curves in drawing was nearly as great as Rubens's own. The Flemish woman has been unduly blamed. Rubens's method of drawing was deliberately adopted, and, while it was partly influenced in its flourishing and writing-masterly style by his technical handling of the brush and his desire for rapid execution, yet a thousand drawings show that it was carefully prepared for. His copies after Michelangelo show instructively the difference between the sixteenth and seventeenth century ideals, while it is precisely in his portraits, where he was bound most closely to fact, that his peculiar drawing is least noticeable.

He could draw like any one else when he was not trying to be grand and effective.

Of his prodigious ability and fecundity there is of course no doubt. He carried on a vast manufactory for the production of religious and decorative pictures, with the aid of an army of assistants and collaborators; and the amount of work produced and its general excellence are amazing. If he had done nothing but design the canvases that bear his name, and never painted a stroke of them, their number would still be almost incredible; but he is known to have worked more or less on almost all of them, and to have painted many (and some of the largest) entirely with his own hand and in an astonishingly short time. Such rapidity of production was possible only by virtue of the utmost systematisation. Each of his assistants was allotted a special task for which he was specially trained, and in the master's own work there was no reliance on mood and no place for accident. Everything was arranged for and calculated in advance, and every day's tranquil and regulated labour brought the picture just so much nearer its predestined completion. If anything was bad, it was easier to paint a new picture than to change the old one. The very handling, with all its ease, certainty, and celerity, was always methodical and never hurried. Rubens was systematic in all things, and his life was ordered like his pictures, and his pictures like his life. In such works as the

Medici series in the Louvre there is little personal feeling and little poetry, but the ideal of the time is embodied in a robust and rhetorical prose. If we no longer admire them greatly, it is because our ideals have changed.

To have been the representative artist of an epoch is to leave a great name; but if Rubens had produced nothing but such works as we have been discussing, one could understand the sneer that Mr. Whistler is said to have uttered, "Whether or not Rubens was a great painter, he was certainly an industrious person." But Rubens was more than the incarnation of the seventeenth century in art—he was the precursor of the eighteenth, and even of the nineteenth century. Though a precocious artist, he yet ripened slowly, and his best and most personal work was done late in life. After his second marriage in 1630, his travels over, rich, famous, and very much in love, he painted more often for himself alone. A series of canvases of moderate size, painted throughout by his own hand and for his own personal satisfaction, are scattered through the collections of Europe. Most of them are portraits of Helena Fourment, who, sixteen when he married her and only twenty-six when he died, lives for ever in her comely youth in these pictures. She is shown us in her habit as she lived, or masquerading in the characters of sundry saints and mythological persons, and she is shown us in next to no clothes at all, either coming from the bath in

a fur pelisse, or posing as Andromeda or Susannah. Here, at last, we find personal feeling, and we find painting the most masterly, colour the most delicious, character, beauty, and charm. In the nudes there are still mannerisms and faults of drawing, but there is a perfection of flesh painting that passes even Titian, while the draped portraits are as perfect as anything ever painted. Through Van Dyck, Rubens profoundly influenced the English portrait school of the eighteenth century; in such pictures of this later period as "The Garden of Love" we see Watteau foreshadowed. The subject is a very Watteau; and while there is more robustness, more solidity, a less ethereal sentiment, there is as much charm as with Watteau himself. Watteau not only founded his technique on that of Rubens, but discovered in such pictures as this his type of subject and treatment. He refined upon it and transported it from earth to ballet-land, but he lost in vitality as much as he gained in grace, and the "Embarkation for Cythera" yields no greater sum of delight than "The Garden of Love."

In his last years Rubens began to live a part of the time in the country, and landscape began first to occupy him seriously. The backgrounds of his earlier works, where landscape is introduced, were generally painted by others, but now he began to study nature for himself and to devote his prodigious skill and the knowledge of his art acquired in a life-

RUBENS: "THE GARDEN OF LOVE"

UNIV. OF MICH.

time of production to the rendering of natural effects. The result is a series of pictures of surprising modernity and truth—far in advance of anything produced by the professional landscape painters of his time. They had a marked influence on the development of landscape art, and M. Émile Michel is quite within bounds when he says that "the best landscapes of Gainsborough, and even of Constable, owe as much to Rubens as to Nature."

FRANS HALS

IF we limit the meaning of the word strictly enough, there can be no doubt that Frans Hals of Haarlem was one of the greatest *painters* that ever lived. For sheer accuracy of vision and brilliancy of execution he has had no superior, and perhaps no equal but Velasquez; yet his fame is singularly modern. He seems to have had a pretty high local reputation at one period of his career, but he died a pauper and was rapidly forgotten. In 1786 one of his pictures sold for five shillings, and, as late as 1852, the life-size, full length portrait of himself and his wife, now in the Rijks Museum at Amsterdam, fetched no more than £50. Thirteen years afterward, "The Laughing Cavalier" was sold for £2,040, and in 1902 a "Portrait of a Gentleman" reached the sum of £3,780. What one of the great Doelen pictures, which in the eighteenth century were rolled up and stored in garret and cellar, would be worth to-day, if it came upon the market, it is difficult to guess. Of course it was the painters who rediscovered Hals. Reynolds seems to have owned one of his portraits, and Northcote, Reynolds's pupil, speaks of it in words that might have been written yesterday. About the middle of the nineteenth century Hals became a living influence among

the painters, and upon his art and that of Velasquez the schools of Manet and Whistler with their divers issues were largely based. Then came Fromentin's "Maîtres d'Autrefois," and another painter, in some pages of brilliant writing, revealed to the world what his fellows already knew. The long eclipse of a reputation was over, and the name of Frans Hals shone forth with a glory which is not likely again to be dimmed. To-day it is more necessary to distinguish than to praise; more important to show what the painter of Haarlem was not, than to demonstrate what he was; more difficult to guard against the possible evils of an overwhelming influence than to recognise the good it has accomplished.

Unfortunately for us, during the long neglect of Hals and his works, most of the facts of his life and a great part of his production were allowed to disappear. There are great gaps in the chronology of his pictures, some of which have been partially filled of late years, but which still remain puzzling in the extreme. His astonishing technical facility shows that his work was produced with great rapidity, while this same facility could have been maintained only by constant practice. There should be scores of canvases, big and little, for every year of his working life, yet there is more than one period of five or six years to which no known work can with probability be assigned. Above all, there is nothing known to exist that can with propriety be called an early work. He is now

supposed, on slender enough evidence, to have been born in 1580, though the date long accepted, on no discoverable evidence at all, is 1584. He was therefore either twenty-nine or thirty-three years old when his earliest known picture was painted, in 1613, and three years older when the next extant work was produced, the first of the great series of Doelen pictures at Haarlem. That he should have been given such a commission at all shows that he was already a master of considerable local reputation; the picture itself shows even more clearly that mastery had been attained. He is to do better work, but technical difficulties have already ceased to exist for him, and he can draw and paint anything he chooses. How did he learn? Who was his first master? What sort of partial successes and full successes put him in a position to be chosen for important work? We can only guess. Mr. Gerard B. Davies's conjecture that, during his young days in Antwerp, where he was born, Hals is likely to have studied with Rubens's master, Van Noort, seems plausible enough; but we know so little of Van Noort that, even if accepted, the conjecture does not greatly help us. It is put forth tentatively, and it is to be hoped that it will not, with the curious facility of such conjectures, get itself taken for fact by the next writer on the subject. Whoever was his first teacher, Hals must have done a deal of work between the ages of twenty and thirty, and it is a pity that some of it has not survived for the edifica-

tion of the student of to-day, who is inclined to begin where the master left off. We have the early paintings of Velasquez, and know through what hard, precise, "tight" work he trained the eye and hand that are later so surprising in their sureness and facility. Mastery has never been otherwise attained, and it is a safe prediction that if any of the work of Hals during this first decade shall be recovered and identified, it will be found admirable, no doubt, but otherwise admirable than the things we know.

The work that Frans Hals did between his thirty-fifth and fifty-fifth years—the period of full maturity—is pretty well known to us. A good deal of it must, indeed, have disappeared, but what is left is so all of a piece—the development is so normal and regular and the visible change so slight—that it is not probable that the lost works would, if recoverable, materially alter our conception of the painter. Such as he was at the beginning of this period, he was at the end of it. There is to be noted only a gradual increase of power, a slight broadening of vision, a growing looseness and lightness of touch. One of the notable things about this output is its limitation of subject. Mr. Davies gives a curious list of the things Hals did not paint; what it comes to is just this: he painted nothing but portraits. He only occasionally introduced a landscape background, and then in a thoroughly conventional and perfunctory manner. He never painted a horse and hardly ever a dog. He painted no "sub-

ject pictures." We can think of no other painter in the whole history of art whose effort was so strictly limited in its direction, and this narrowness grew upon him and is even more marked after 1640 than before that date. In his later years his figures rarely have any visible surroundings of any sort. In artistic qualities, also, he was as limited as in range of subject. He had only a rudimentary sense of composition; light and shade is, for the most part, interesting to him only as a means of drawing. His colour is sometimes pleasing and surprisingly well harmonised, considering the parti-coloured costumes he painted and the directness of his method, but he was hardly a colourist. His growing tendency to the use of black shadows in flesh would, alone, show an indifference to colour. He was a painter of likenesses—a portraitist pure and simple.

But if Hals was only a portrait painter, was he not one of the greatest of portrait painters? Yes and no. Northcote, in the passage already referred to, says: "For truth of character . . . he was the greatest painter that ever existed"; and adds, "if I had wanted *an exact likeness* I should have preferred Frans Hals to Titian." The exact likeness was what Hals was after. He had little sense of beauty. He was capable of some gravity and dignity, but beside Velasquez he is common. He was a great student of expression, but, compared with Rembrandt's intensity of life, his figures grimace. There is rarely anything subtle

about him, and never anything poetic; he saw with admirable clearness and rendered with wonderful accuracy just what every one may see. He was, as nearly as possible, the absolute realist.

No artist ever lived, however, who had not an ideal. With Hals, as with many a literary realist, that ideal is to be found in his style—his personal manner of expression. What he says is obvious enough, but the way in which he says it is inimitable. He is an almost unapproachable master of the language of painting. Pure art is always an arrangement of something, notes or forms or colours or words; what Hals arranged was brush-strokes, and his mere handling becomes a contribution to the æsthetic pleasures of the world. He was a master stylist, and the greatest virtues of style, in painting as in writing, are, after all, clarity and precision. We are apt to be carried away by his ease, his rapidity, his brilliancy and crispness of touch, and to imagine that these are his great qualities; but any one can be rapid and easy—what is truly amazing with Hals, in his prime, is his certainty. What astounds is not that the touch is instantaneous and slashing, but that each of these instantaneous slashes is infallibly in exactly the right place, and of exactly the right shape to express the form and texture of the thing he would render. What we call painting, in the narrower sense, is, after all, the expression of form with the brush, and Hals was an almost impeccable draughtsman. His sense of form

is not delicate, but, except for an occasional tendency to elongate the forearm, it is unerring. Whoever would imitate him must begin with acquiring his mastery of drawing. His characteristic combination of rather commonplace vision with extraordinary powers of execution finds, perhaps, its highest exemplification in the "St. Adriæn's Shooting Guild" of 1633, though there are many examples of it nearly as wonderful.

Somewhere about 1635 a new element seems to enter into Hals's work. His tone becomes graver, his colour somewhat warmer, his light and shade more suffused, his interest in the rendering of objects more subordinated to the study of atmosphere. In a word, his art becomes more Rembrandtesque, and it has long been thought that, during this period, he came under the influence of the master, more than twenty years his junior, who was painting, only thirteen miles away, at Amsterdam. Fromentin first called attention to the resemblance of Hals's picture of "The Regents of St. Elisabeth's Hospital" (1641) to Rembrandt's "Syndics." Mr. Davies points out that this resemblance is purely superficial, consisting mainly of the likeness in number of figures, arrangement, costume, etc., and that, as Rembrandt's picture was painted twenty years later than Hals's, these things, if they prove anything, prove rather that the younger master was indebted to the elder than the reverse. He points out, also, that during the years from 1635 to (say)

HALS: "ST. ADRAEN'S SHOOTING GUILD"

OF MICH

1648, during which the Rembrandt influence is supposed to have existed, Hals produced many pictures which show no trace of this influence. This is undeniably true, but is not surprising. Many of the accepted dates of Hals's pictures are conjectural, but the "St. Joris's Shooting Company" is certainly of 1639, and shows no Rembrandtesque qualities. On the other hand, it is one of the poorest of the series of corporation pictures, and might be thought to show that Hals, even when not experimenting in his new manner, was losing interest in his old. Other work of this time, like "The Merry Toper," is of the nature of brilliant sketching, and may be supposed to have been done as a relaxation—a playing with that of which he was sure between serious efforts at that which was harder for him. Two portraits at Frankfort (said to be of 1638) are dismissed by Mr. Davies as too much restored to be fair tests. The "Maria Voogt" of 1639 he considers to be like Rembrandt mainly in externals of costume and so forth. The "Old Lady" of the Bridgewater Gallery (1640), he admits to be very like Rembrandt, saying that, if it be indisputably genuine, "I can see no escape from the admission that we have here Hals experimenting in the style of Rembrandt, and carrying his experiment to the length of scarcely disguised imitation." In all the other pictures he sees no more than a growth of Hals's sense of atmosphere, which he thinks requires to be accounted for by no outside influence. He does

not mention at all a portrait of "Feyntje van Steenkiste" in the Rijks Museum, which, judging from the reproduction alone, is one of the most Rembrandtesque things Hals ever painted.

It is evident, from the dates alone, that we must leave Rembrandt's later work out of the count in considering his possible influence upon Hals. Indeed, after 1640, Rembrandt ceased to influence anybody, even his own pupils. It is not the Rembrandt of the "Syndics," but rather the Rembrandt of the "Anatomy Lesson" that must be reckoned with; the relatively grayer, smoother painter, then at the height of popularity. Hals was, as a mere technician, the superior, and would not be likely to change his handling; the influence that Rembrandt would have would be precisely in that "growth of the sense of atmosphere" which was his gift to the whole Dutch school. It is incredible that such a genius as Rembrandt should not have influenced any painter living within thirteen miles of him. The wonder is—and it is a proof of Hals's powerful individuality—that the influence was not more marked and more dominant than it appears to have been. It seems to have begun about 1634 or 1635, reached its height, perhaps, with the Bridgewater portrait, and was already declining when the "Regents" was painted in 1641. In that picture there are sharp, pure blacks in the flesh-shadows which are unlike anything in Rembrandt, and which become characteristic of Hals in his later works.

During this Rembrandtesque period, Hals produced his noblest pictures—those which are nearest to being great works of art as well as great pieces of painting. After that period his technical powers begin to decline. He was more than sixty years old, and, if he had in reality been the drunkard he has been called, it is incredible that he should have held them so long. After 1641 his works become few and far between, but a picture here and there helps to bridge the gap that formerly existed between the great canvas of that year and the last efforts of his genius, the two Regent pictures of 1664. In these rare works positive colour tends more and more to disappear, the palette is reduced to its lowest terms, blackness invades everything. The handling is still free, freer than ever—but it gradually ceases to be precise. What we call tone is taking the place of colour, and form is giving way to suggestion. From failure of eye, the heads tend to grow larger than life; from failure of hand, the touch becomes loose and fumbling. He is no longer capable of the marvels of rendering of his younger days, but the acquired knowledge of a lifetime is still there. The language stumbles, but it is a master who speaks. In the last pictures of all, painted by an old man dependent upon poor-rates, who was at least eighty and may have been eighty-four years of age, there is a certain largeness of vision, a certain way of seeing things by their great relations, which marks him, more than ever, the artist. In the male group,

especially, the drawing has gone all to wreck, and even the sense of resemblance is no longer convincing; but the feeling of tone and of unity of effect has become so great that there are not wanting artists to proclaim it, everything considered, his finest work. Two years later he died in the "old man's home" of which these, his latest sitters, were governors.

From all that has gone before, it is not difficult to divine where, in the hierarchy of painters, Frans Hals belongs. His range is too limited, his sense of beauty too restricted, his intellectual value too slight, to allow us to place him among the great ones of the earth. Not only can he not be placed, with Michelangelo and Rembrandt, among the poets, but his prose is far less various and elevated than that of Velasquez. For clearness and vigour of statement, for "truth of character" and "exact likeness," he has no superior, and the language of painting, as applied to the enunciation of fairly obvious truths, has no greater master. Somewhere below the baker's dozen of the very greatest, but on a pedestal of his own, he will stand for ever in the temple of fame.

REMBRANDT

OF all the great masters of painting none is more popular to-day than Rembrandt. No one is more admired by painters, and no one is so much written about and praised by critics. The solitary old man whose fame was already so forgotten that his death was unnoticed by his contemporaries, and whose portraits, a few years later, could be bought for "sixpence apiece," is now considered by many the greatest of all masters. Dozens of earnest searchers rummage in musty records to glean the slightest fact connected with his life, and books and articles without end are devoted to his memory. After three hundred years his strangely original genius is appreciated, if not understood, and long-neglected pictures are brought forth from garrets and given places of honour in great museums or sold for enormous sums to American millionaires. M. Émile Michel has written an elaborate life of the artist and Mr. Charles Knowles Bolton has devoted a volume entirely to Saskia because she was Rembrandt's wife.

A Life of Rembrandt reads much like a Life of Shakspere. Really next to nothing is known about it, and the elaborate investigations undertaken of

late years have served more to destroy legends formerly believed than to add much of authentic information. "Possibly" and "perhaps" are the ever-recurring words, and we are more often told that he may, might, could, would, or should have done or felt this or that than that he really did so. The possibilities, too, have a strange knack of becoming probabilities, and the probabilities certainties in a few pages, and so lend themselves as bases of deduction for new possibilities, which go through the same transformation. Most of M. Michel's guessing is plausible and seems to have some foundation in the only real record of Rembrandt's life—his work, which is generally dated. The system is burlesqued in Mr. Bolton's little book on Saskia. Of Saskia nothing is known at all except her birth and parentage, the date of her marriage, the dates of the birth of her children and of her own death, and such an idea of her personal appearance as can be gathered from various portraits more or less plausibly assumed to be hers, and very different from each other in expression and even in feature. How then write a Life of her? The task is easy. Bring in the Prince of Orange and Sir Philip Sidney, Alexandre Dumas and "La Tulipe Noire," lions, monkeys, and Dr. Tulp; assume that if Rembrandt scratches an etching of a woman in bed, Saskia is failing fast, and then introduce a most robust personage as a portrait of her a year later; make her a good influence in his life, and tell how,

after her death, "his hand etched pictures unworthy" of him, in the face of the fact that the worst of the "free" subjects are of the year 1640—and the thing is done. On page 2, "Rombertus van Ulenburgh, the father of Saskia, in the early autumn of the year 1578 was a student in *some* foreign university, *perhaps* at Paris or in England." On page 3, "he *must have* enjoyed his walk to the Thames to see the barge of Leicester pass, or to look upon the gray beard and knitted eyebrows of Burleigh, the great minister."

M. Michel is not so bad as this, but even M. Michel works his guesses rather hard. He objects, justly, to the "mania for identification" which has given various historic names to Rembrandt's portraits and etchings, but he is not free from the malady himself. His identification of Rembrandt's father is plausible, but he makes Saskias and Hendrickjes of female figures, nude or costumed, that have slight resemblances to each other, and, once having decided that Rembrandt worked much from members of his household, will have brothers and sisters and servants at every turn. Perhaps the strangest of all is his identification of the so-called Sobiesky with Rembrandt himself, in spite of a discrepancy of ten or fifteen years between the apparent age of the model and the date of the picture. Yet the master played such strange tricks with his own features that it is not impossible he played this one.

Eliminating the conjectural in Rembrandt's life,

what is left that is important can be briefly enough told. Rembrandt Harmensz, who sometimes called himself Van Ryn, was born in Leyden of a respectable lower-middle-class family on the 15th day of July, 1606-7 or 8—for the date even is uncertain, and there seems about as much documentary evidence for one of these years as for the others. No record of Rembrandt's early youth has come down to us, but the may-have-beens bravely fill the gap. He was enrolled in the university, but how much he studied there we can only guess. At "about" the age of fifteen he began the study of art with a bad painter, Jacob van Swanenburch, and "probably" stayed with him three years. In 1624 he went to Amsterdam to study with a painter of greater reputation, the Italianizer Pieter Lastman, but remained in his studio less than six months, when he returned to Leyden, determined "to study and practise painting alone, in his own fashion." This was in 1624, and his earliest known works, the "St. Paul in Prison" in the Stuttgart Museum and "The Money Changer" in the Berlin Gallery, are dated 1627, so that three years are unaccounted for. After this time he soon began to be celebrated, so much so that Gerard Dou became his pupil in 1628 and remained with him until 1631. That Dou was his pupil seems strange until one finds that Rembrandt's work at this time was much more like Dou's than like his own later productions. In 1631, when he went to settle

definitely in Amsterdam, he was already a well-known painter, and was shortly the fashionable portrait-painter of the day. The next year, when he was not more than twenty-six years old, he painted the "Anatomy Lesson," which set the cap-sheaf on his glory and made him the most famous of Dutch artists.

At this time he met Saskia van Uylenborch, a young woman of a much wealthier and better family than his own, and was welcomed as an aspirant by her relatives, and married her in 1634. In 1639 he bought the house in the Breestraat that was never paid for, and filled it with the collections that figured in his inventory eighteen years later. He was fond of his wife and his work, always busy, the master of many pupils, earning much money, and spending it lavishly on his wife and on his collections. He bought paintings, engravings, and bric-à-brac at extravagant prices, and seems to have been regularly fleeced by dealers and money-lenders. Titus, the only child of his marriage that lived to maturity, was born in 1641, and Saskia died in June of the next year. In that year also he painted "The Night Watch," that puzzling picture which generations of critics have fought over, and which Capt. Cocq and his company, for whom it was painted, understood as little as the rest of the world. This was the beginning of the end. Rembrandt was becoming too original to be popular; and as time went on, and his

work grew better and better, the public neglected him more and more. He shut himself up in his work, made his servant, Hendrickje Stoffels, his mistress, and let his finances take care of themselves. The crash came, and in 1657 he was declared a bankrupt, and sold up. From that time his life becomes more and more sordid and miserable. He had no money of his own, and could have none, and Hendrickje and Titus, in partnership, took charge of all his affairs, and made him an allowance. In 1661 he painted his grand picture of "The Syndics," perhaps the greatest of his masterpieces, but it does not seem to have been admired. It is likely that his eyes were beginning to fail, for his etchings cease altogether from this year, and from 1662 to 1664 there is no work at all from his hand. Hendrickje must have died about this time, though there is no record of it. Titus married and died, both in 1668, and in 1669 the old man himself followed him, an obscure pauper. He left a daughter by Hendrickje, who did not live long. In the next generation his posterity seems to have become extinct.

But if the known facts of his life may be thus briefly catalogued, it is very different with his work. In this also is he like Shakspere, that commentary and discussion on his art are endless, and that judgments on it have been passed which differ as the North from the South. One extreme is marked by the opinion of a painter of the next generation, Gerard de

Lairesse, a contemporary and rival of Van der Werff, which Michel quotes as follows: "In his efforts to attain a mellow manner, Rembrandt merely achieved an effect of rottenness. The vulgar and prosaic aspects of a subject were the only ones he was capable of noting, and, with his red and yellow tones, he set the fatal example of shadows so hot they seem aglow, and colours which seem to lie like liquid mud upon the canvas." The other extreme is marked by the latter-day thick-and-thin admirers of the master, who maintain that he was not only a great poet in light and shade, but a great colourist and a great draughtsman as well, and who lay all the blame of the ugliness of some of his figures upon the models. M. Michel is explicit and reiterative upon this point, and considers poor Saskia and Hendrickje responsible for the bandy legs, sprawling hands, and stumpy bodies of various Susannahs, Bathshebas, and Danaes. He expatiates on the difficulty of securing models in virtuous Holland, and explains that Rembrandt had to take what he could get. Many of Rembrandt's portraits, however, are as ill-proportioned as his nude studies, while the works of Ter Borch and Metzu, his contemporaries, and of Vermeer of Delft, but little younger, are there to show that there was grace and beauty and refinement in Dutch life at the time. M. Auguste Bréal takes stronger ground. He has no patience with those who regret or apologise for Rembrandt's coarseness, and would take from him his

"broad subjects" merely because they are "unworthy of his genius." Rembrandt's work was all of a piece. "'Classic' beauty is not his province. Life is what he seeks, the life that he knows and understands."

"Do the coats of the Syndics, or their conical hats . . . remind you of the harmonious draperies in the friezes of the Parthenon? And if you admit that Rembrandt has been able to find and make you feel a new beauty . . . in the lines, colours, and reflections of his fellow-townsmen's clothed bodies, why do you refuse to see the delicate tones, the palpitating flesh, the marvellous suppleness of line and modelling, the comprehension of certain harmonies of the human body shown by Rembrandt in his nudes? Accustomed to see the representatives of an academic tradition exhibit their carefully cleaned, smoothed, and polished dolls, . . . the sight of something real shocks and disgusts you. . . . If any one of our contemporaries, worn out by the driving life of towns, or any townswoman of the twentieth century, deformed by stays, grown heavy by overfeeding, or exhausted by a life in which little attention is given to 'eurythmy,' should be tempted to reproach Rembrandt with a realism that seems at first sight excessive, they should reflect that Rembrandt is perhaps the only one of the old masters who would have been capable of feeling, expressing, and making us understand and love the living charm and grace hidden in these bodies of ours, bodies on which we heap our mendacious dresses, and

REMBRANDT: "THE SYNDICS"

UNIV. OF MICH.

of which we fear the nakedness because we do not know how to see the beauty."

All this is good and healthy criticism as far as it goes, but it does not quite satisfy. Let any painter who has spent thirty years studying the human body without its "mendacious dresses" say whether Rembrandt's women are not vastly uglier than life. Let him who has seen how supremely lovely can be the body of a young girl, how much harmonious line and beauty of structure is to be found, by him who has eyes for it, in the forms of the commonest models, say whether the one word "realism" adequately explains the hideousness of these "Dianas" and "Bathshebas." Michelangelo did not make "smooth and polished doll.," but he would have seen wonders of beautiful form and line in any human body because form and line were what he was looking for. Rembrandt did not see them because he had no care for form and line. His one love was character, his one aim expression, his one means light and shade. When Rembrandt does show a sense of beauty, his worshippers cry aloud and call upon us to admire it; why should they not admit that more often he does not show it? Fromentin's remark, that Rembrandt saw nothing in life "but physical ugliness and moral beauty," still remains, as does so much else that he has written, the truest word of criticism upon that strange genius.

Indeed, Fromentin's analysis of Rembrandt's genius remains the best yet written, and I need make no

apology for condensing a part of it. According to our teacher, then, Rembrandt was two men in one. On the one hand was the thoroughly trained Dutch painter of the time, the realist *par excellence*, the perfect technician, the observer, *l'homme extèrieur*. Of this Rembrandt no better example could be cited than that known to all of us, "The Gilder." Here is no poetry, no idealism, no style, but a piece of work so thorough, so wonderful, so truly seen and rendered, that it rightly ranks among the masterpieces of the world. This is the Rembrandt who was the idol of the Dutch public, the man whom the compatriots of Ter Borch adored. The other Rembrandt was an idealist, a dreamer of strange dreams, a worshipper of light. The "Supper at Emmaus" in the Louvre is *his* work. The mysterious charm and power of such work as this is indescribable and incommunicable. For once a result seems to have been produced in art without any visible or analysable means. Something supernatural seems before one, and one feels himself in the presence of a being who has really died and risen again. Yet in technical matters the picture is every way inferior to the portrait of "The Gilder." It is not particularly well drawn, and it is entirely without colour. In its physical appearance the canvas is mean and insignificant—and its handling is timid and almost fumbling. With something to say that had never been said, how should he say it with assurance and in the current language of art?

As long as these two Rembrandts were separate, one was sure to please. But the dreamer insisted on having a hand in works where the observer only was needed, and the result was such an enigmatic picture as "The Night Watch." It is a splendid failure, and Capt. Cocq can hardly be blamed for preferring the accomplished mediocrity of Van der Helst. Again the two Rembrandts take up their different tasks, but the public confidence is shaken, and public favour is deflected upon more reliable artists who can be trusted not to dream *mal-apropos*. Shut off from public favour and public commissions, the dreamer is strengthened and the technician weakened. Strange experiments are made, violences are resorted to, methods become more and more startling and original. Late in life, once or twice only, the master-painter and the great imaginer coincide, and pictures like "The Syndics" are produced—pictures in which imagination and observation work together for the production of the perfect masterpiece; but it is too late, and the technique, perfect as it is, is no longer the smooth accomplishment of earlier days. No one comprehends and no one cares, and the great painter drops into his neglected grave.

A colourist, save once or twice, Rembrandt never was. Neither was he, properly speaking, a draughtsman. M. Bréal has pointed out that Rembrandt never drew a single figure, there being always some suggestion, however slight, of the surroundings in which it is

placed. It may be as truly said that he never drew an outline. When he seems working in pure line it is not the contour he is drawing—his line follows the mass, suggests the direction of folds or the bagging of muscles, breaks, and continues again. The line itself is suggested (or potential) light and shade. Beauty of form, as such, was nothing to him, and he cared for form at all only as it gave surfaces for light to fall on and shadows to catch in. He drew a woman as he did a pig, from the picturesque point of view; and the creased and flabby shapes of his ugly women were *better*, for his purposes, than would have been the rounded limbs of a Greek nymph. So he expressed the soul of a poet through forms of an astounding vulgarity, and conveyed a depth of sentiment almost unique in art, though the figures he drew are often almost inconceivably grotesque.

Of chiaroscuro he is the supreme master. It is almost his only method of expression, and with it he says such strange things as were never, before or since, said by art, and makes us dimly see one of the greatest and most profoundly original minds in the world's history. Like all such minds, he had no artistic posterity, and worked almost pure harm to those who were influenced by him. Like Michelangelo, he was the ruin of his followers. The language of these solitary minds is fitted only for the expression of their own thoughts, and becomes empty verbiage in the mouths of imitators.

WILLIAM BLAKE

THERE is a great fascination in the incomplete, and a glory in understanding the misunderstood and admiring the unappreciated. When any man has fully and clearly expressed himself—when what he had to do or say in the world is thoroughly done and unmistakably said—why bother one's self to explain the clear or interpret the known? But the half articulate genius whose message the people have not heard or comprehended, the fire of whose inspiration is smothered in its own smoke—the man of fitful force and unbalanced power—he furnishes to the discerning critic his true opportunity. There is little credit to be had in praising what all the world admires, and little need for ingenuity to read what is plainly written; but it needs a penetrating mind to discern the beauties of what most of the world despises, and to find or invent a meaning in what men take for madness. So there is more written of William Blake than of Veronese, and almost as much as of Michelangelo.

Whether or not Blake was actually mad is a question for the professional alienist to decide. Perfectly sane he certainly was not. He spoke constantly of his "visions" as having objective reality; but whether

this was hallucination or mystification, who can tell? He was incoherent to the verge of raving, vainglorious to a degree that suggests the *folie des grandeurs*, and suspicious and unjust to an extent which reminds one of the mania of persecution. Whether he was or was not mad, his was assuredly a singularly ill-regulated, unbalanced, and untrained mind. In art his education was little enough, but it was, fortunately for him, of the right kind. In literature he had almost no education at all, and a good deal of what he had was of the wrong kind. The hard and dry style of engraving he learned from his master Basire was eminently salutary to Blake as an artist. In spite of his strange genius he was technically a convinced classicist. He was amusingly bigoted in his denunciation of the colourists and of "that infernal machine called Chiaroscuro," and maintained that "the great and golden rule of art, as well as of life, is this: That the more distinct, sharp, and wiry the bounding-line, the more perfect the work of art; and the less keen and sharp the greater is the evidence of weak imitation, plagiarism, and bungling."

Of course this is silly and one-sided, and largely the result of ignorance and prejudice; but there is an element of truth in it. In the first place, it must be remembered that "nature put him out"; that, as he said of himself, "natural objects always did . . . weaken, deaden, and obliterate imagination" in him. Now *painting*, as we understand it since the Venetians,

requires for its perfection the direct study of nature, and, therefore, was not for him who found that the posed model "smelt of mortality," and who was not strong enough (as the truly great artists have been) to make nature serve him rather than allow nature to master him. Michelangelo did not find even the "mortality" of the dissecting-room deadening to his imagination. Yet Blake felt that in art mere vagueness was death. The highest imagination is always the most definite, and "a spirit and a vision are not, as the modern philosophy supposes, a cloudy vapour or a nothing; they are organised and minutely articulated beyond all that the mortal and perishing nature can produce. . . . Spirits are organised men." Debarred from great realisation he found safety in the very hardness and dryness of his method, which gives a sense of accuracy even when accuracy is absent, and makes even false drawing look marvellously sure and vivid. His wildest creations seem as if they must have been really observed, because his method of statement is so precise; and they owe half their effect to that cause. His style "fitted him," and gives the same reality to his apocalyptic visions which those of Dürer possess.

In literature, however, Blake had nothing answering to the training in clarity and precision which, as a draughtsman, he had gained from his long practice of engraving and of drawing Gothic monuments. He was altogether self-educated, and ignorant even of

grammar. He shared in the admiration for Ossian that was common in his time, and retained it after the rest of the world had outgrown it. He always maintained that both Ossian and Chatterton's "Rowley" were genuine beings, and "owned himself an admirer of Ossian equally with any other poet whatever." His early "Songs of Innocence and Experience," in spite of grammatical and metrical stumbles, contain, as we all know, much lyrical power and true beauty; but when he began to occupy himself with religion and philosophy, to form a theory of the universe and of good and evil, and to make myths which should convey his notions on these subjects, both his thinking and his style were those of an untrained and unbalanced mind. The so-called "prophetic books" are "full of sound and fury, signifying nothing."

They are written in what has been called "unrhymed verse," but it is not really verse at all, and has no other vestige of versification than the arbitrary division into lines with a capital at the head of each. Here is a passage without the line divison. Blake is speaking of "Beulah"—

"Where every female delights to give her maiden to her husband: the female searches sea and land for gratification of the male genius, who in return clothes her in gems and gold, and feeds her with the food of Eden."

This has a certain rhythm, but it is distinctly the rhythm of what is known as poetical prose. It has no

line structure; and any one who does not know the original may be defied to divide it as Blake did.

The thoughts conveyed in Blake's prophetic books are as much the outcome of an untrained mind as is the poetry in which they are conveyed, but were they really valuable it would matter little. After all, what the world most loves is art, and thought has never long saved a work not plastically beautiful. To consider Blake as prophet and seer is much like considering Turner mainly as the author of "The Fallacies of Hope." In his art he really attained to definite expression, thanks to his hard training, and though he never was a painter, in any just sense of the word, as an illustrator in black and white, whether of his own ideas or of the works of others, he displayed undoubted ability. His knowledge of the figure was far from complete and his anatomy is often impossible, while his taste was sometimes faulty and his ornamental flourishings are frequently mean and trivial. On the other hand, he had a strong imaginative sense of the weird and awful, a feeling for grandeur of style and an ability to suggest space and movement. Some of the "Inventions to the Book of Job" reach a very high level of dignity and beauty, and are more essentially *large* in their small dimensions than many a twenty-foot canvas or fresco. Due distance guarded and allowance made for their inferior completeness, they are almost worthy of comparison with Michelangelo, of whom they contain many reminiscences.

The engraving of the morning stars singing together is one of the grandest designs in all art. It should be remarked as bearing on the sanity of these works and Blake's consciousness of rational adaptation of means to ends in their production, that he never attributed their authorship, as he did that of his later poems, to supernatural inspiration. The spirit of his brother suggested the methods of engraving some of his designs, and St. Joseph told him how to mix his colours, while "Flemish and Venetian demons" interfered with him; but he never seems to have doubted that the drawings were his own. The visions posed for him, but they did not draw for him.

PART II

PAINTING IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

BESIDES the inherent difficulty of properly estimating contemporary work, there is an especial difficulty in dealing with the painting of the nineteenth century. Art in the past has been traditional, national, and homogeneous; art in our day has been individual, international, and chaotic. At the beginning of the century the so-called "classical revival" destroyed what remained of the traditions of the Renaissance, and almost destroyed the art of painting as such. When men again began to wish to paint, each had to experiment for himself and to find what methods he could. Modern means of communication and modern methods of reproduction have brought the ends of the earth together and placed the art of all times and countries at the disposal of every artist. The quantity of painting produced has been enormous; the number of individual artists of some distinction has been remarkable; and the succession of "movements" and revolutions, each rapidly extending its influence over the civilised world, has been most puzzling. From this tangled skein it may, however, be possible to pluck a few threads.

Most of the characteristic tendencies of modern painting have had their origin or attained their high-

est development in France, and France has certainly held the primacy of art in the past century, as did England in the eighteenth, Holland and Flanders in the seventeenth, and Italy in the sixteenth. The history of modern painting is largely the history of painting in France. Yet in the first third of the century there is really only one name in France, or, for that matter, on the continent of Europe, that takes a very high rank. David was a man of force, but neither he nor his followers were painters, and still less were the cartoonists of Germany; Prudhon alone was a really great artist. He was deeply influenced by Correggio, but he had an individuality of his own, and, in spite of the ruin wrought by bitumen, his best canvases are singularly lovely, and of all modern work approach nearest, perhaps, to the power of flesh painting of the old masters. Later the classical school produced another artist of high rank, however little of a painter, in Ingres. In him the classical tradition was profoundly modified by study of Raphael. He was not a great draughtsman in the sense of mastery of significant form, but he had rare feeling for beauty of line. His drawings are exquisite, and a few of his portraits will prove immortal. His contemporary, Delacroix, was the head of the romantic revolution. Delacroix was a man of great intellectual power, but hardly an altogether successful painter. What he did was to break down the classical tradition and make room for modern art rather than himself create it. He

PRUDHON: "L'ENLÈVEMENT DE PSYCHÉ"

and his contemporaries were greatly influenced by English painting, and in the first third of the century English painting was still the most vital in Europe. Affected as are the works of Sir Thomas Lawrence, he was still a continuer of the traditions of Reynolds and Gainsborough, and, through them, of Van Dyck and Rubens. England was the latest country to be reached by the Renaissance, and the country that longest retained the traditions of painting; and in England the classical school had hardly existed. When painting began to revive, it was first to England and then to Rubens that it turned for its examples.

The greatest achievement of painting in the past century is the creation of modern landscape; and the most singular phenomenon, as Fromentin pointed out long ago, is the extension of the methods of the landscape painter to other branches of art. Now, the history of modern landscape begins in England. Turner cannot be neglected; he was indubitably a powerful and original genius. But he stands alone. It was Constable, the inheritor of the tradition of Gainsborough and of Rubens, who first stimulated the study of landscape in France. It was in France that under this stimulus grew up a school of painters of landscape, and of figures and animals in their relation to landscape,—the so-called "Barbizon School,"—which produced the art of the century that most nearly equals the great art of the past. If any

painters of our day are to be ranked as indubitable masters, these painters are certainly Millet, Corot, Rousseau, and Troyon. The others commonly named with them are so inferior to them that they need not here be separately considered. Rousseau's art is founded on Rubens and the Dutch, Corot's on Claude. What they added was a profound study of nature, and particularly of natural light and what painters call "values." Rousseau is naturalistic and rugged, while Corot is lyric. His best landscapes are perhaps the most delicately poetical and beautiful ever produced. In a landscape almost as fine as theirs Troyon placed cattle and Millet the rustic man. How wonderful as a pure landscapist Millet was is perhaps hardly understood. His peculiar distinction is that he was the first painter to study man in nature, and to give the relation of the figure to its surroundings. But besides this modern quality he had in large measure the qualities of all great art. He was a master of simple and dignified composition, a noble colourist, and the greatest master of drawing as expressive of the action of the human figure since Michelangelo. Perhaps no other master, certainly no other modern master, has shown such capacity to express the essential nature of a movement and to resume it in a permanent type—to paint *The Sower*, not a sower.

The successors of the Barbizon School were those who have been called the "Impressionists." With them the study of light and the painting of every-

thing as if it were landscape reached its extreme. Composition, drawing, even colour for its own sake, were more and more neglected, while the analysis of light became the one essential, and the relations of things seemed vastly more important than the things themselves. Manet, who is generally considered the founder of this school, did not really carry its peculiar manner very far. He began with a rather unsuccessful attempt to paint like Velasquez; in his last days he was influenced by younger men and attempted something like the parti-coloured manner of Monet, but his most characteristic work is blackish in colour, flat, and with heavy outlines. He had, however, a genius for the beautiful handling of oil paint as a material. More or less associated with the school was an original painter of considerable power, Degas, but its most influential exponent is Claude Monet. It is he who has carried farthest the experiment of dissecting and recombining the solar spectrum and of producing light by "ocular mixture" of colours. The permanent influence of the school will probably not be very great. It will have somewhat broadened the aims and enriched the palettes of other painters; but its neglects were too many, and it was bound to be succeeded by an art that should again take up the study of beauty, of composition, of form, and of decorative colour.

The great bulk of French painting has always been and still remains academic. The officially recognised

painters of France—the medallists and members of the Institute—are generally men of the schools, trained in draughtsmanship, feeble in colour, conventional in composition. Some of them have attained great power and distinction, notably Gérôme, Meissonier, Elie Delaunay in his wonderful portraits, and Baudry (who, however, belongs rather with the decorators); but they have added little that was new to art. Their output and that of their followers has been much modified by two influences: that of the great modern exhibitions and that of photography. The "exhibition" is distinctly modern—a child of the nineteenth century. From putting into museums those things of beauty which had outlived their original purpose we have come to make things especially for museums and to get together temporary museums each year for their exhibition. Hence the gallery picture and the *machine du Salon*. The Barbizon men were often kept out of the Salon and the Salon had not in their time reached its present proportions. The Impressionists have largely kept themselves out. For those who have regularly participated in the annual exhibitions, the desire to be seen in the crowd has resulted in a steady increase in the size of canvases, with no justification in subject or decorative intention; in constantly growing sensationalism of subject; and, finally, in all sorts of fads and technical extremes.

There have always been naturalists in painting, but photography has shown us, as nothing else ever could,

what nature is actually like. Almost with the invention of photography came the Preraphaelite movement in England, a short-lived attempt to abandon all artistic conventions and to substitute for them the painstaking and accurate portraiture of natural fact. A similar ideal attained more nearly its realisation in France at a much later date. With Bastien-Lepage, the tendency to consider man as a part of landscape and the tendency to minute naturalism were combined. The model was posed out of doors, and both the figure and its surroundings patiently studied and realised. All fleeting effects had to be abandoned in favour of the gray daylight that alone permits long study in the open air, and composition, style in drawing, and even beauty were sacrificed to fidelity. At his best the result was amazingly like the still unrealised photography in colours. Some of his portraits and pictures are masterpieces in their own way, and before his death he did some beautiful landscapes. With the general mass of painters the influence of photography has been almost wholly for evil, and its result a dead level of commonplace.

Outside of all the schools there have been, meanwhile, here and there, independent artists who have, each in his own way, kept alive this or that quality of more ancient art. Rossetti, more poet than painter, soon abandoned Preraphaelitism for a decorative formula and the study of colour and sentiment. His friend and pupil, Burne-Jones, modified while he

carried on the Rossettian tradition, and he and his numerous followers have been, in our day, the especial champions of the Florentine ideal of decorative line. Beside them but apart from them, and tracing his inspiration to the Venetians, was George Frederick Watts. In spite of uncertain draughtsmanship and a fumbling technique, his dignity of composition, elevation of feeling, and occasionally grave splendour of colour raise him to a rather lonely height among nineteenth century painters, and he more often reminds one of the great old masters than any other modern. Gustave Moreau was a sort of French Rossetti, enveloping a purely personal sentiment in a form unlike any other, while in Germany the profoundly original and imaginative genius of Boecklin has kept up the protest against mere realism.

In these men, and in others their contemporaries, the various elements of painting as an art—imagination of subject, beauty of drawing, intricacy of pattern, richness of colour, gravity and simplicity of tone, even brilliancy of handling and the manipulation of material—have had their exponents. But perhaps the most characteristic phase of the art of the end of the century, in its reaction against naturalism, has been the revival of pure decoration. In England this has led to the arts-and-crafts movement, with its somewhat eccentric mediævalism, and it has had its somewhat comic phase throughout the civilised world in the poster mania. Its more serious results have been

mainly confined to France and the United States. In France the decorative tradition was never quite lost, and it was revived in its fullest splendour by Paul Baudry in his paintings for the foyer of the Paris Opera House. As a master of significant form, Baudry was one of the greatest of the moderns, and he was a charming colourist also, but he was pre-eminently a master of decorative composition, and, as a vast scheme of ordered line and space for the decoration of a public building, his great work is perhaps the most notable achievement since the Renaissance. His reputation has suffered some eclipse in these later days, but it is safe to predict that it will, sooner or later, shine forth again; and it will be seen that he was none the less a great artist for that academic training which it has been something too much the fashion to decry.

Indisputably, however, the most influential master of decorative painting in the latter part of the nineteenth century has been Puvis de Chavannes. In him, to a noble simplicity and a great feeling for composition, rather in spaces than lines, has been added a strong sense of landscape and a mastery of light and values, so that his work, while as "mural" as Giotto's, is as modern as Monet's. Originally a very fair academic draughtsman, he came more and more to sacrifice form and detail to monumental gravity and breadth of treatment, until his work, always austere, reached at last perilously near to the verge of empti-

ness and lack of interest. It is always saved by decorative fitness and by great beauty of tone and quiet colour. In our day France has produced much bad decoration as well as some good, but in the Hemicycle of the Sorbonne it has left to future ages an undoubted masterpiece.

America's serious contribution to the art of the world has been made mainly in the last quarter of the century. Our earliest painters were entirely British in training, and some of them became British in nationality as well. Stuart, Copley, West, and Allston are merely second-rate painters of the English school. The influence of France first made itself felt in Hunt, who was a pupil of Couture and greatly influenced by Millet. He was a man of powerful personality, but what he has left behind him is extremely fragmentary. His contemporary, George Fuller, was a self-educated genius who, in spite of an insufficient training, and through a strange technique, gave glimpses of a valid talent. These are the names of greatest importance until the awakening caused by the Centennial Exposition of 1876 and the return to this country shortly thereafter of the American students from Paris and Munich studios. The work of these younger men was, for some time, reflective of that of their foreign masters, and American exhibitions showed in succession the latest fashions of foreign work. The International Exposition of 1900 for the first time triumphantly demonstrated to the

world that a real American school exists, and that it is certainly second only to the French.

Yet of the artists whose work makes up this showing the two most distinguished are men to whom America can make but slight and doubtful claim. The name of Whistler belongs to the history of art at large rather than to that of art in America. A contemporary of Manet and an exhibitor with him in the famous *Salon des Refusés* of 1863, he never returned to America, but lived in Paris or London, surviving long enough to see work which was at first laughed at finally accepted as among the most accomplished of the century. Always intensely individual, hardly a draughtsman or a colourist, and least of all a naturalist, he devoted his art to refinements of tone and delicate division of space. His work is now as indiscriminately praised as it was formerly attacked, but his best things have an abiding charm, and he is to-day one of the most widely influential of modern painters. John Sargent is even less American than Whistler, for, though of American parentage, he was born abroad and his training was, as his art remains, wholly French. His sense of colour is, like that of most French painters, rather mediocre, and beauty of tone is not especially his province. His distinctive qualities are a profound mastery of drawing, as expressed by planes rather than by lines, and a wonderful manual dexterity. These two qualities, in combination, have made him one of the most brilliant of modern tech-

nicians, and, added to them, a strong sense of character has made him perhaps the first of living portrait painters.

No other of the many able and clever Americans residing abroad has reached the degree of distinction attained by these two, nor has any of them, unless it be Mr. Vedder, given any distinctively national or personal note. It has been otherwise with painters who have either remained at home, or, once their apprenticeship finished, have returned to this country and have been forced to rely upon themselves. Two Americans, Inness and Wyant, will surely take high rank among the landscape painters of the century; the first a master of passionate and powerful colour, the second a gentler and more delicate nature; both were influenced by the men of Barbizon, yet each struck a note of his own, and each had something national as well as personal to add to the art of the world. With the landscape painters also may most conveniently be classed one more intensely American than either of these, Winslow Homer. Possessing no foreign training, showing no foreign influence, always himself, Homer has steadily pursued his way, attaining year by year more nearly to his own ideal. His drawing is not always sure, his colouring is rather neutral, his handling is never brilliant, but a strong personality marks everything he does, and figure or landscape is seen with a true artist's vision. No marines ever painted give a greater sense of the

weight and power of water than do his, and he has painted some figure-pieces of marvellous vigour. After these came a whole school of younger men who have absorbed the training of Europe and have felt all contemporary influences, but whose work in accent, as in subject, remains American, and who are to-day the most vital landscape painters in the world. Among them may be specially mentioned D. W. Tryon and Horatio Walker, the first more influenced by French methods, the second by Dutch, but each an individual artist of great force.

That America has something to say in figure painting as well as in landscape is evident when one thinks of the exquisite sentiment of Thayer, the scholarly and clean-cut drawing of Brush, the delicate charm of Dewing, and the brilliant craftsmanship of Chase. In the work of these men and their fellows there is a sincerity, a scorn of sensationalism, a true pursuit of art for its own sake, that are rare in the painting of to-day. Finally, America has done and is doing something interesting and valuable in pure decoration. Years ago John La Farge, whose work in stained glass is as new in kind as it is supreme in merit, so that he may almost be called the inventor of a new art, did some admirable painting in Trinity Church, Boston, as he has since done in other places. After that, little was attempted until the Chicago World's Fair of 1893 gave an opportunity to several of our painters to show what they could do in that line.

Since then one public building after another has been decorated with paintings, and the results are familiar to us all. Such men as Simmons, Blashfield, Mowbray, and H. O. Walker have each developed a decorative style of his own, while they have managed to work together and to preserve the general harmony of a great decorative scheme in a way which contrasts most favourably with the decoration of such foreign buildings as the Paris hôtel de ville or the Panthéon. If we have produced no single work of the value of some of those by Baudry or Puvis de Chavannes, yet our mural painting has been marked by reticence, dignity, and true decorative spirit.

Since the wave of the Renaissance first started from Italy, the country last reached by it has been the country that at any time has produced the best art. The wave has barely reached us, and it is not impossible that it is to America we must look for the best art of the twentieth century.

FORD MADOX BROWN AND PRERAPHAELITISM

WHEN the definitive history of that artistic movement known as Preraphaelitism comes to be written, a very large place in it will be given to a never very celebrated or very successful artist who died, almost in obscurity, on October 6, 1893. Whether or not Ford Madox Brown may properly be considered the true founder of Preraphaelitism, his grandson, Ford Madox Hueffer, is amply justified by the facts in calling him its precursor. An older man than any of the "brothers," the chosen master of Rossetti, and the adviser (if not strictly the master) of Hunt, his influence upon these young men must have been great. He never joined the Brotherhood himself, and several reasons have been given for it. There is even a contradiction of memory as to whether he was ever asked to do so. A comparison of the statements of Brown himself, of Holman Hunt, and of others would seem to show that if he was not formally asked, it was because he did not care to be, and that the obstacle was simply his greater age and experience, which rendered him somewhat less enthusiastic than his young friends, and gave him a

distrust of brotherhoods and formal associations as leading to "cliquishness." In his art he was for many years more Preraphaelite than almost any of the Brotherhood, and he remained a Preraphaelite longer than any of them, except Holman Hunt, who has never changed.

Ford Madox Brown was born in Calais in the year 1821, the son of a retired purser of the British Navy, who resided abroad for reasons of economy. He early showed artistic tastes, and began the formal study of painting as a pupil of Gregorius of Bruges at the age of fourteen. In 1838 he became a pupil of Wappers at Antwerp, and it was the knowledge then acquired that gave him prestige, when he went to England, as a technician and as one who "was up in the Belgian School." On just how much technical achievement this reputation was based it is difficult for one to say who has not seen his earlier works. His methods were so revolutionised afterwards that his early training in painting went for nothing. Such of his drawings as have been reproduced are almost incredibly feeble in handling. How he learned to paint may be well understood from his own words:

"Those were the days," he says, "when my respected master, the late Baron Wappers, having been commissioned by his Government to paint the 'Belgian Revolution,' had, for speed's sake, two of his pupils, whose duty it was to smear in with their hands, early in the morning, as much asphaltum as

he could afterwards cover in with revolutionary heroes during the remainder of the long summer day. . . . These were the days when Wilkie's best works were coated with asphaltum, which has since made fissures all over them; when Hilton's *Sabrina* was so flooded with it that it now has to be hung alternately right side and wrong side upwards to prevent the figures from entirely running to the top or bottom of the picture."

In 1840 Brown went to Paris and spent four or five years there. He went into no school, but worked for and by himself. At this time Delaroche was the recognised head of the French school, and his style seems to have influenced the young Englishman in the choice of subject and general manner of treatment of such pictures as the "Mary Queen of Scots going to Execution," which was painted at this time. There seems to be no evidence that he was influenced by Delacroix and the colourists, or that he ever heard of the great landscape school that was then growing up in France under the influence of his countryman, Constable. It seems to have been entirely of his own motion, and without knowing anything of parallel attempts, that he then made his first efforts at realistic lighting, and tried, in his "Manfred," to paint figures in the open air as they would really look. He was not successful and soon began to "study Rembrandt" and went back to his bitumen. In 1840 he paid his first short visit to England, and met the

young lady who became his first wife and who died in 1845. In 1844 there was another short visit to England, and the exhibition at Westminster Hall of his cartoons of "Harold," "Adam and Eve," and the "Spirit of Justice," which seem to have impressed no one but Haydon, who, if a bad artist, was sometimes a good critic. It was the failing health of his wife which led to the voyage to Italy that was the turning-point in Madox Brown's career. Three important things happened during this voyage. First, he saw the Holbeins at Basle, and was deeply impressed by their unshrinking and absolute realism; second, he met in Rome the "Nazarenes," Cornelius and Overbeck, and his attention was drawn to their mediævalising theories and their use of the term Preraphaelite; third, he saw the work of the early Italian painters. The results of these influences were shown almost immediately on his return to England, where, his wife having died in Paris on the way home, he settled in 1845.

W. Bell Scott has given us a picture of the state of art in England shortly before Brown's arrival. When, in the spring of 1837, at the age of twenty-five, he broke away from his father's engraving business in Edinburgh and went up to London, "a shy youth with poetry in his pocket and little knowledge of the world and himself," the younger men who were kept out of the Academy and were constantly attempting to start an opposition exhibition were such as

Frith, and others whose names are less known. Eastlake was President of the Royal Academy. Turner was "the joke of the public," Constable "near his end and never a favourite," and Etty and Maclise were about the best of the artists. There was little chance to exhibit, little patronage, and less interest in art. Landscape-painting was "below zero," and figure-painting was largely confined to the illustration in paint of popular novels, such as "Don Quixote" and "Gil Blas." It was the period of the Annuals, and the Book of Beauty style of work was all that was wanted. Kenny Meadows had done two drawings for Heath's Annual, representing Anne Page and her mother, and Heath insisted that Mrs. Page should be as young as her daughter: "I don't care about her maternity, or Shakspere, or anything else. You must not make her more than twenty, or nobody will buy! If you won't, I must get Frank Stone to do her instead. All Frank Stone's beauties are nineteen exactly, and that's the age for me."

It was to such artistic surroundings that Brown came, and among them that he began to develop his new ideas.

The "Chaucer at the Court of Edward III.," begun in Rome, was not finished until 1851, but in 1846 he painted his "Portrait of Mr. Bamford" and in 1847 his "Wycliffe Reading his Translation of the Bible to John of Gaunt." His own account of

the portrait may be quoted in full as showing better than could anything else the temper in which it was undertaken. The italics would seem to be the artist's own:

"It is," he says, "the first evidence of an entirely new direction of thought and feeling on my part. . . . To those who value facile completeness and handling above painstaking research into nature, the change must appear inexplicable and provoking. Even to myself, at this distance of time, this *instinctive turning back to get around by another road* seems remarkable. But in reality it was only the inevitable result of the want of principle, or rather confliction of many jarring principles, under which the student had to begin in those days. Wishing to substitute simple imitation for *scenic* effectiveness, and purity of natural colour for scholastic depth of tone, I found no better way of doing so than to paint what I called a *Holbein of the nineteenth century.* I might perhaps have done so more effectively, but *stepping backwards* is stumbling work at best."

It would be hard to express more explicitly the essential doctrines of Preraphaelitism than is here done. "Simple imitation" and "purity of natural colour" (*i. e.*, crudeness and brightness) were its great aims, and were first formulated by a man who was, to all intents and purposes, a foreigner, newly landed in London, and who knew not Ruskin. The other great mark of the movement, its mediævalising

tendency and the worship of the early Italian painters, is shown with equal clearness in the "Wycliffe." Here we have a composition arranged under a pointed arch, the principal figure bolt upright and squarely facing the spectator in the exact middle of the canvas, and supported by subordinate groups to right and left; a diffused light with no dark shadow anywhere, the figures being relieved against a distant landscape and pale clear sky; closely studied mediæval costume; and heads evidently copied directly from nature. If this is not a Preraphaelite picture, it is certainly very near it, and it was the exhibition of this picture which called out the celebrated letter from Rossetti asking to become Madox Brown's pupil. It is worth noting in passing that the letter was signed "Gabriel C. Rossetti," Rossetti not having as yet adopted the Dante which afterwards figured in his signature. It was in Madox Brown's studio that Rossetti was set at the accurate copying of still life, which he did not at all like, and it was to Madox Brown that he came, in 1848, "laughing, or at least more or less joking, about some discovery of Hunt's. It turned out that they were the reproductions of Orcagna's frescoes at Pisa.

". . . I told him it was all nonsense to laugh at them—they were the finest things in the world, and he'd far better go and look at them again; and, of course, he said just what I did after he'd thought about it.

"As to the name Preraphaelite, when they began talking about the early Italian masters, I naturally told them of the German P. R.'s, and either it pleased them or not, I don't know, but they took it."

So was the Brotherhood founded, and the only reason given by Hunt for Brown's never having been formally invited to become a member, besides his age and the unpopularity of his works (!), is "that his works had none of the minute rendering of natural objects that the P. R.'s, as young men, had determined should distinguish their works."

Scott tells us how he met Rossetti and Hunt about this time. It was in Holman Hunt's first studio in Cleveland Street, where these two were working at their first Preraphaelite pictures—those which, with Millais's "Supper at the House of Isabella," were to make known the new doctrine, and familiarise the public with the three mystic letters. The scene is most characteristic. Rossetti's picture was "The Girlhood of Mary Virgin," and he was painting it "in oils with water-colour brushes, as thinly as in water-colour, on canvas which he had primed with white till the surface was as smooth as cardboard, and every tint remained transparent." Hunt was working at his "Rienzi," and Scott "was made to observe that the chain mail in his picture was articulated perfectly, and as an armourer would construct it, every ring holding four other rings in its grasp —a miracle of elaboration." He had even "intro-

duced a fly, as we see done in some early Flemish portraits, to show how minute the artist's hand could go."

From this one glimpse into the Cleveland Street studio almost the whole history of the Brotherhood may be divined. The intellectual influence of Millais, the third of the original trio, seems to have been *nil*, and his *rôle* was that of the clever executant and populariser of the movement. Rossetti plus Hunt is the formula of Preraphaelitism. The four other "brothers" may be neglected altogether. The only one of them who ever did anything in art was Woolner the sculptor, and it is difficult to see *que diable allait-il faire dans cette galere.* It is doubtful if the real originators of the movement ever had any such clearly formulated body of doctrine as Ruskin afterwards attributed to them; but the tendencies of their work are clearly attributable to the two personalities of Rossetti and Hunt influenced by Brown and working upon each other and upon Millais. Three men more fundamentally unlike it would be difficult to imagine. Hunt was the man of iron will and indomitable perseverance, with little natural talent, making his way against all sorts of difficulties by dint of determination and unremitting labour; religious and somewhat sombre of temper, a realist by nature, and too narrow of vision and limited of education to find realisation in anything but the minute pursuit of actual fact without regard to visual

truth of aspect. Rossetti was the brilliant, flighty, poetic nature, utterly intolerant of continuous effort, unable to acquire any serious training, and to the end an amateur of genius; thoroughly egotistic, but possessed of great personal fascination and influence over others, a spoiled child; without deep religious feeling, but fascinated by mediævalism and "the Art Catholic" from the purely picturesque and æsthetic point of view. Millais was the brilliant executant, the "crack student" of the Royal Academy, handsome, easy, good-natured, destined from the beginning to worldly success, only temporarily influenced by the other two and sure to break away from that influence very soon.

From Hunt's uncompromising realism, added to Rossetti's choice of subject, sprang Preraphaelitism as we know it. It is not by accident that, in illustrating the doctrine, it is to Hunt's pictures that Ruskin constantly recurs, for he was the real exemplar of the doctrine, and remains to-day the one true Preraphaelite painter. Absolute fidelity to fact, plain literalness of conception, scorn of prettiness and composition, endless painstaking and thorough realisation of detail—these things, which constituted Preraphaelitism as Ruskin understood it, were Hunt's natural language. For a year or two Rossetti niggled and stippled, but with him his stippling was sheer inability to paint otherwise, and he felt it to be so. He worked for months on the calf in "Found,"

and succumbed in despair: the picture was never finished. Then he gave up exhibiting, gave up painting in oil, gave up painting from nature, and did little water-colour drawings, mediæval in subject, brightly coloured like illuminations, and done entirely out of his head and without models. By 1859 we find him taking up oils again and painting life-size, with the distinct purpose of avoiding "the niggling process" and of "learning to paint." He never did quite learn to paint, and his work always remained amateurish and feeble; but it is no longer Preraphaelite in anything but name. Such a picture as the "Lady Lilith" differs from any other painting only by virtue of the personal and temperamental characteristics of its author and by the feeblenesses and mannerisms of imperfect training. It shows the influence of Titian much more than that of any primitive painter, in its technical aim. As for Millais, his Preraphaelitism was a temporary phase of his development, corresponding to the period of intense study of detail through which most painters have passed. He was the only one of the three possessed of *talent*, and the pictures painted under the influence of the other two were those which gave the school its *éclat* and what popularity it had.

Though Hunt was the true Preraphaelite, he has had little influence and has raised up no followers. It is not difficult to see now that the movement was a false one, and based on the denial of art. In trying

to "go back to nature" from the false and feeble art of that time, Hunt went so far that no art was left at all. His hardness, rigidity, ungainliness, painful elaboration, shocking crudity of colour, can have an attraction for few mortals; and Preraphaelitism as he and Ruskin understood it was predestined to sterility. The pseudo-mediævalism of Rossetti had a different fate. He, at least, was an artist if not a painter, and his personal fascination and a certain charm in his mannered and faulty work exercised a great influence on Burne-Jones, William Morris, and others. And so it happens that the only school founded by the brotherhood of painters who preached absolute fidelity to nature as their cardinal doctrine, is precisely the most artificial and anti-natural school of art to-day existing, and that the Neo-Preraphaelites, sprung directly from the only genius in the old Brotherhood, practise the very reverse of what that Brotherhood preached. Their art is languorously affected, determinedly archaistic, wonderfully elaborated, but never true to fact.

If in the one particular of minuteness of detail Madox Brown was not yet a Preraphaelite when the Brotherhood was founded, he soon became one to the fullest extent; and no more thoroughly Preraphaelite paintings exist than "The Last of England" and "Work." Neither can any clearer insight into Preraphaelite methods be gained than from the perusal of some passages of Madox Brown's diary. His

phrase of "stepping backwards" describes Preraphaelite practice perfectly. Preraphaelitism, as practised by its founders and as advocated by Ruskin, was essentially an appeal to the boy or the savage; it was the denial of synthesis, of composition, and of art, and the attempt to produce a literal imitation of nature by exact analysis and by a return to the most primitive of technical methods. Their practice was more important than their theory, and this was to paint each object separately, direct from nature, on a pure white ground, proceeding thus until the last object was finished and the last bit of canvas covered, when the picture was complete. Justness of effect and beauty of tone are impossible by such a manner of working, but a certain glaring brightness of colour and a hard glitter of detail are gained. The savage love of bright colour and the savage desire for clearly recognisable facts are both satisfied. At the very time when the men of Barbizon were producing their splendidly synthetic and essentially artistic work, the most serious artists of England were struggling with the impossible task of reforming art by reforming it altogether.

On Thursday, the 19th of June, 1856, Madox Brown "came home and debated what I was to do. By Friday night I settled upon two fresh subjects." One of these was afterwards called "Stages of Cruelty," but is generally referred to by the artist, for obvious reasons, as "the Lilac Leaves." He had

decided upon the picture on Friday night, and this is the account of the first day's work: "Saturday, 21st—After some bother and delays, began by three and worked till eight at the garden one; painted eight bricks and some leaves." Observe that, in this case, there cannot have been even an outline on the canvas. The "eight bricks" were painted all by themselves. A month later (July 19) he has "A great deal of trouble in arranging the leaves at the side of the head, pinning on fresh ones where they are blighted." It is only on the next day that he begins "designing the two lovers." The picture was finally laid aside and not finished till 1891. "The Last of England" was also painted in the open air, and, "when the flesh was being painted, on cold days," "to ensure the blue appearance that flesh assumes under such circumstances." The result on the painter's health was disastrous; that upon the pictures is best given in his grandson's own words:

"When one stands before the picture ["Work"], it is difficult for the eye to find a point on which to settle. The colour, too, is not 'colourist's colour,' at least as I understand the words; it is wanting in harmoniousness, disturbing, and what not. One might almost say that both pictures ["Work" and "The Last of England"] had been painted with the then newly discovered aniline dyes."

Such was the true Preraphaelitism of the early fifties, and of its exemplars Holman Hunt is the only

survivor, as he was the only one who continued to work in that manner. With the founding of the "Firm" (Morris, Marshall, Falkner & Co.), the movement changed front entirely, and became an æsthetic movement instead of a realistic one. Madox Brown was here also something of a "precursor," having been in the habit for some years of designing furniture for himself and his friends. He was one of the founders of the "Firm," and furnished it with many cartoons for stained glass. As a result, after 1865, "his pictures became rather essentially decorative than essentially realist." As a member of the English æsthetic school he is best known, and in that capacity he has been a good deal overshadowed by the greater artistic and poetic feeling of Rossetti and the vastly greater ability of Burne-Jones. It may be doubted whether, in the words of his biographer, "this stage of his art was nearly as much his own as was the realistic one." Yet in this later vein he produced such works as "Cordelia's Portion" and "Elijah and the Widow's Son," to name but two, which have great and serious qualities, if also grave defects. First of these qualities are to be ranked fine dramatic feeling and emotional expression. His colour is also said to have attained great splendour and depth. His drawing was always tentative and uncertain, and in his effort for dramatic expression he was tolerant of strange awkwardnesses and ungainly attitudes. Another fault was an inexplicable

fondness for great bundles of crinkled drapery that destroy all simplicity of mass and dignity of line. His last years were devoted to a series of decorative paintings for the Manchester town hall, which show in their composition all the merits and all the faults of his later manner. Of their effectiveness as decoration one who has not seen them in place has no right to judge.

To quote his grandson and biographer, in conclusion:

"His work was never suave, never *quite* complete; but it was vigorous and honest to the end, always instinct with a noble feeling for style, and, within its wide but well-defined limit, as thorough as possible."

MILLAIS

JOHN EVERETT MILLAIS, beginning as a rebel, ended as the official chief of British art, and lived through a storm of savage criticism to become the most popular painter ever known and the darling of the great British public. From "Johnny" Millais, P. R. B., to Sir John Millais, P. R. A., was a vast stride; and from the painter of "Ophelia" and "The Huguenot" to the painter of "Bubbles" seems, at first sight, an even longer one, though critics have differed as to its direction. To us, however, looking back from the vantage ground of the present, it seems certain that Millais was essentially the same from beginning to end, that his ultimate triumph was always assured, and that the only wonder in the matter is, that it should have taken the British public so long to discover that he was the man for its money. As a matter of fact, it did not take the public as long to find this out as it did the critics, and the engraving of "The Huguenot" was selling like hot cakes while the press was snarling and snapping at the painter's heels.

John Everett Millais was born at Southampton, June 8, 1829, of a family of poor gentlefolk from the Island of Jersey, where much of his childhood was

passed. He exhibited a remarkably precocious talent for drawing, and was taken to London at the age of eight to begin the serious study of art, entered the schools of the Royal Academy at ten, and had taken every prize that that institution offered to students before he was twenty. It was this pet of the schools, this predestined Academician, who in 1848 joined with the earnest but obscure Hunt and the flighty and untrained Rossetti to found the Preraphaelite Brotherhood, and unfurled the banner of revolt against accepted methods of painting.

Preraphaelitism was a complex movement, compounded of Rossetti's poetic mediævalism and Hunt's religious mysticism and naturalism, and it was only with this last element of it that Millais had any real sympathy. His "Isabella" was influenced by Rossetti, and his "Carpenter's Shop" by Hunt; after that, his Preraphaelitism took a colour of its own and became merely a manner of painting. He was much the most brilliant executant of the set and a splendid fighter, and therefore naturally bore the brunt of the opposition aroused by the movement.

There are, however, not wanting signs that the opposition was less serious than has been thought. The fact is lightly passed by, in his son's life of the painter, that in 1850, the year of "The Carpenter's Shop," when the "storm of execration" was at its loudest, Millais was elected an Associate of the Academy, and the election annulled only because it was

MILLAIS: "THE HUGUENOT"

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discovered that he was not yet of the requisite age. In 1852 came "The Huguenot," the first picture definitely his own; and in 1853, when "The Proscribed Royalist" and "The Order of Release" appeared, the Academy capitulated. It had taken only five years to force its doors, and Millais was an A. R. A. at twenty-four. Meanwhile it is well to note that his pictures were almost invariably sold, and for what still seem very fair prices. The "bullying" of the press really did him no harm, and brought out Ruskin in his defence. He was the most discussed and therefore the most famous artist of the day. In his letters he grumbles much and talks of efforts to "put him down," and seems to dream of a conspiracy against him. The fact is, rather, that few young artists have had so easy and rapid a road to success.

How soon he began to outgrow the primitive methods of his school is shown by W. Bell Scott's record of a conversation with him, "a year, or perhaps two," after the first visit to Hunt's studio in 1847-8:

"I was in Millais's studio," says Scott, "when I observed a print hanging there framed. It was an Italian engraving, inscribed 'From Nature,' by Agostino Lauro at Turin, dated 1845, and called 'Meditacione,' representing a girl seated among shrubs and trees. Every leaf of every plant, nay, the two halves of every leaf, radiating from the

centre fibre even of those in shade, were elaborated, and the pattern on the dress of the girl was in every part exactly made out. I was arrested by this print when Millais quitted his easel and approached. 'Ha! you've observed that, have you? that's P. R. B. enough, is it not? We haven't come up to that yet. But,' he went on, 'I for one won't try; it's all nonsense; of course nature's nature, and art's art, isn't it? One could not live doing that!'"

About the same time he said to Mrs. Combe: "People had better buy my pictures now, when I am working for fame, than a few years later, when I shall be married and working for a wife and children." How far the fact that one "couldn't live doing that" influenced the change, it is hard to say, but it was within two years of his marriage that his break with Preraphaelitism began to show itself in "Sir Isumbras," and it was more clearly accented by "The Vale of Rest" and "Apple Blossoms" in 1859. For a time the fight was on again in all its fury, with Ruskin now at the head of the enemy. These pictures were still too Preraphaelite for his old opponents, while they had ceased to be Preraphaelite enough for his old friends, and nobody was pleased. The "Apple Blossoms," perhaps one of his most artistic productions, was one of the most unpopular pictures he ever painted. This time, however, the opposition collapsed even more quickly; "The Black Brunswicker" of the next year becoming

vastly popular. In 1863 appeared "My First Sermon," the earliest of his pictures in what may be called his "Christmas *Graphic*" style, and he was made a full Academician at once.

Madox Brown lived and died an unsuccessful man. Rossetti was the painter of a clique and the founder of the æsthetic cult. Holman Hunt, by dint of dogged persistence and by his appeal to the religious sentiment, worked his way through long neglect to a partial popularity. Millais was, almost from first to last, a favourite of the British Philistine, because he saw with the eyes, thought with the brain, and felt with the soul of the average Briton. Mr. A. L. Baldry says, speaking of "Chill October" and its successors: "The unquestionable popularity that Millais gained by his excursions into landscape was certainly due to the fact that his observation was of the ordinary and everyday kind"; and a little later: "He never could be ranked among the inspired painters of the open air, nor could he ever be said to have dealt exhaustively with the problems presented by natural phenomena. He remained untouched by the subtleties of atmospheric effect, by the varieties of momentary illumination, or by the fleeting glories of aërial colour, which provide the student of nature's devices with the chief incentive to artistic effort."

This is very acute criticism, and it is surprising that the author of it did not see that, in everything else, as in landscape painting, Millais's "observation

was of the ordinary and everyday kind," and that his phenomenal success was due as much to the fact that he never puzzled his public by seeing what it could not see, as to the fact that he saw and rendered what it did see with wonderful accuracy.

In the "Life and Letters," by John Guille Millais, we are given many illuminating glimpses of Preraphaelite methods of study and production. The formula was something like this. One took a canvas into the country and found something that interested him as a background. Often the subject of the picture was still undetermined, and always the figures were, at most, lightly outlined on a white ground. Leaving a space for the figures, the background was painted "inch by inch," as Ruskin used to say. It might take months to complete, but changes of season mattered as little as changes of light, and the painter who could work eleven hours a day "under an umbrella throwing a shadow scarcely larger than a halfpenny" without noticing that the sun had changed its position, was not likely to be bothered by the succession of blossoms. When the picture was "done, all but the figures," it was taken to London, and there, in a studio, the figures were painted with equal minuteness from life. And this was supposed to be truth to nature. It is not until "The Proscribed Royalist" that we hear of any effort to paint the figure in the same light as the landscape, the effort consisting in letting in the sun through a window. In this case

Millais also rigged up a lay-figure on the spot to get the draperies right with their surroundings. He does not seem to have done the like very often. Brown's conscientiousness in painting out of doors in cold weather to get the purple colour of the flesh was never much in Millais's line. The minuteness of finish Millais gradually abandoned. The painter who had said, in 1851, "Great success blunts enthusiasm, and little by little men get into carelessness, which is construed by idiotic critics into a nobler handling," could say of Ruskin in 1859, "He does not understand my work, which is now too broad for him to appreciate, and I think his eye is only fit to judge the portraits of insects"; but the change was in reality only a superficial one, and the "breadth" was that of brush-stroke only, not of point of view.

The truth is that Millais was, all his life, equally insensible to truth of values and beauty of tone; to the larger truths of nature as to the greater qualities of art. The lack of minute finish in his later work only renders more evident the limitation of view that was always there. It is not more essentially—only more visibly—artificial than his early work. But if Millais never had any sense of values, no more had he any feeling for composition or for drawing as such. He drew fairly well as regards accuracy to fact, but there is nothing in his work to show that he ever cared for line or form as a means of artistic expression. In fact, he never cared for any purely artistic quality be-

cause it was artistic. He was a typical Englishman, with the Englishman's love of sport, of out-of-doors, of the family, and of sentiment. He loved a landscape because it was a good spot for fishing or shooting, an incident because it was heroic or sentimental, a woman because she was handsome, and a child because it was a pretty child; he never cared for or thought of what he could make of it in a work of art—the grace of an outline, the intricacy of a pattern, the dignity of a silhouette, or the harmony of tone and colour. He looked at landscape like a game-keeper, and it has been said that he saw children "like a nursery-maid." In early days he enjoyed the minutiæ of realisation, and in later days he revelled in the sleight-of-hand of suggestion, but it was always representation that he cared for, never art; and representation of mere fact, never of effect.

He has been much blamed for the falling off of imagination and invention in his later work—it seems to me, unjustly. He had never had much, and what little he had was illustrative, not pictorial, imagination. His tendency to produce his result with as little trouble as possible showed itself at least as early as "The Huguenot." He had meant merely to paint two lovers, but Hunt persuaded him that the motive was not sufficiently dignified, and that some historical episode must be suggested. The white scarf did the business and a picture resulted that took the public taste. As Mr. Monkhouse says, in "British Contem-

porary Artists": "The picture touched the dearest sentiments of the English, it appealed to their sense of beauty, to their affections, to their love of moral courage, and to their religious convictions. If Millais had thought it all out beforehand . . . he could not have chosen a subject more attractive to the visitors of the Royal Academy."

The type of picture once established was adhered to, and "The Huguenot" was followed by "The Proscribed Royalist," "The Order of Release," and "The Black Brunswicker." Gradually it dawned upon Millais that even this much of invention was more than was necessary, and that one figure and a title (if the figure were that of a pretty woman) would answer the purpose; and he painted "The Gambler's Wife" and "Yes or No." What did it matter? All he cared for himself was the model and the sleight-of-hand. "If I were a rich man," he said, "I would pay some one to paint pictures for me, and spend my time in putting high lights in the boots." His executive talent nearly reached the level of high art at times, and "The Yeoman of the Guard" and "Mrs. Bischoffsheim" are so brilliantly executed as to be nearly great. At worst it degenerated into a wormy, stringy handling that is distressing. On the other hand, his later attempts at grand art, such as "Jephthah" and "Victory, O Lord!" are lamentable failures. Better one "Cherry Ripe" than a hundred such historical pictures. After all, there is subject enough in

"Cherry Ripe" for a Sir Joshua, or even for a Velasquez, if only there were the artist eye to see it.

But if Millais was very little of an artist and only half a painter, he was an illustrator *pur sang*. Trollope said that "Orley Farm" was the best illustrated of any novel ever published, and probably he was right. Millais's merits and faults equally helped to make him a good illustrator, and in Trollope he found the man he was best fitted to illustrate. The author gave the ideas, and the artist found the forms; and the more he was occupied with sheer representation and the less he bothered about composition, the better. All Millais's illustrative work shows his remarkable fitness to become eye and hand to another man's brain. He did not have persistent visions of his own which came between himself and the page, to lead him, as they led Rossetti, into fantastic embroideries upon the text. What Millais saw in his reading was just what the average Englishman sees there, and that he put down quite clearly and comprehensively. In Trollope he found a man of his own type—an average Briton like himself—and we have Trollope's own word for it that Millais's drawings are an exact transcript of what the author meant.

There was one other field in which Millais's preoccupation with representation rather than art, and with fact rather than with aspect, was of service to him—that of portraiture. The very greatest portraits are works of art also, but there is a level at which artistic

preoccupation hinders veracity. Millais will not rank with the greatest portrait-painters, but at least he did not allow style or line or tone to stand between him and a clear perception of the sitter. In his portraits of women and children he did, indeed, allow the desire of prettiness to master him; but in his best portraits of men he is earnest and veracious, and some of England's greatest men will probably be remembered as he has represented them.

The late President of the Royal Academy always knew what his public liked, and always gave it them, while he had sufficient skill as a technician to merit and to retain the respect of his professional rivals. He was far from a great artist, but he was a most industrious and honourable man, and probably deserved all that he received. If there were, perchance, truer artists who were neglected while he succeeded, they had their reward in the doing of their work and the hope of a posthumous immortality, even if their portraits do not hang in the Uffizi.

BURNE-JONES

WHEN an original artist has at last mastered his public and compelled recognition, we are apt to cry out against the ignorance or malice that has delayed the recognition; but we are usually wrong. The world is not so unready to recognise good work when it is once done, but it is natural and necessary that it should require some definite proof that the work is good. Certainly Burne-Jones had little to complain of. If he was ridiculed for some of his mannerisms and peculiarities, he found patrons from the first and was the object of as much enthusiastic admiration as ridicule. Much of the criticism on his earlier work was entirely deserved, and even in his best and most mature productions there are weaknesses and mannerisms which it is perfectly right and natural to point out. Nay, a critic is not necessarily either foolish or malicious because he finds these peculiarities so offensive to his taste as to overbalance his enjoyment of the merits which few would deny. He simply occupies one of the two positions one or other of which every one instinctively takes towards every novelty.

Burne-Jones's earliest pictures were painted under the influence of Rossetti and, by Rossetti's advice,

without previous study of any sort; and they show all the imitative tendency and technical weakness that might be expected from such a beginning. The drawing is often childish in the extreme, the execution laboured and painful, and the imitation of Rossetti's types and manner very marked. Gradually the imitation becomes less noticeable, and the artist's own style disengages itself; while, by dint of long and serious study, the drawing becomes elegant and refined and the workmanship, though remaining elaborate and detailed in the extreme, becomes broader and more assured. With the "Chant d'Amour," the "Wine of Circe," and other pictures painted in the sixties, he becomes definitely the artist as we know him. Thence he grew steadily more accomplished, and also accented more and more that tendency to archaism which is so strongly marked in him and which has given offence to his critics.

He had not publicly exhibited for many years when the Grosvenor Gallery was opened in 1877 and the "Angels of Creation," the "Mirror of Venus," the "Beguiling of Merlin," and several minor or unfinished works were shown. Works of so much power and so different from the general run of painting naturally excited much discussion, and it is impossible to deny that there were faults enough to justify the scoffers. *Punch's* description of the figure of Vivien as "at least twelve heads high" is somewhat of an exaggeration, but she certainly is preternatur-

ally tall, and both her figure and that of Merlin are, or appear, impossibly posed and curiously drawn. Neither could a woman well get her gown into such folds as Vivien's, or walk in it if she did. From the naturalistic, which is the natural, point of view, the picture is absurd enough. Yet there were merits in these works of a high and rare kind. There was a great power in the arrangement of lines and great feeling for the beauty and quality of the line in itself, endless invention in intricate and charming detail, a strange mastery of expression, always the same but always interesting. The same type of head, constantly recurring, with the same wistful, wide-eyed, melancholy look, reminds one of the "waters wan" that appear at such brief intervals in the verse of Burne-Jones's great friend, William Morris.

The "Angels of Creation" shows the painter, perhaps, at his very best. The mastery of composition revealed in the constantly varying treatment of the same simple motive, the gradual crowding of the narrow panel as figure after figure is added without the harmony of line or mass ever being disturbed for a moment, the curious invention of plaited fold and woven wings that make his angels seem like strange feathered creatures to whom flying is more natural than walking—all this is wonderful and inimitable. True, the graceful hands and feet are unnaturally long and slender and somewhat boneless; true, that light and shade are absent and the figures are im-

mersed in water rather than in air, so clear and unatmospheric is the effect; true, the sentiment is somewhat lackadaisical and sickly-sweet—true, in a word, that this is art of a highly artificial kind, unrobust and stifling, and that one feels in it as in a hothouse filled with flowers, and longs for a breath of "caller air"; but it *is* art, and art of singular power and perfection within its limits, and its qualities are precisely those ordinarily lacking in the naturalistic and wholly picturesque art of to-day. No wonder that the French, with their legion of good painters who seem not to know what to do with the marvellous realistic power acquired through generations of research, felt that here was something new and different, and worthy of study and of all respect. If Burne-Jones had stopped here, there would be little but praise to give him; but in later works his archaistic tendencies have carried him much farther, with regrettable results.

Mr. Malcolm Bell has undertaken the task of defending the artist against his critics, but he seems to have missed the point of the criticism. His defence is mainly concerned with charges of "insincerity," affectation, and imitation, and also with the charge that Burne-Jones is a "literary painter." On this last count of the indictment he may be acquitted at once. Burne-Jones is always pictorial. He is fond of elaborate allegory and a certain mysticism of thought and under-intention, but artistic expression is always

his main aim. As Leigh Hunt (or was it Hazlitt?) said of "The Faery Queen," "The allegory will not bite you," and if the work of art is beautiful, we can perhaps forgive the artist for having a meaning. But for the other charges there seems to be more foundation. An unnamed critic has said of "The Annunciation," "The Angel Gabriel . . . is clad in insincere draperies, copied from we know not what quaint mediæval work," and repeats in various forms the charge of imitation. Mr. Bell's defence is that Burne-Jones's draperies are not copied directly from any original, and that if any one says so he should point out the original; also, that numerous and careful studies exist for all his works, and that many of these have been exhibited, and that they show that his work is done from nature and not copied from any other artist. All of which is true, but does not in the least affect the point at issue. Burne-Jones is not accused of plagiarism, but of *pastiche*, which is a very different thing. One may work from nature with the intention of imitating the style of another artist, and it is this which Burne-Jones seems to have done very often. Nor is it very difficult to name the sources of some of his mannerisms. At first the style of his draperies is only vaguely Italian and fifteenth-century. Then there is a very pronounced imitation of Mantegna. The draperies of the Vivien and others of that type show most distinctly the influence of the Mantuan master. Later, more particularly in

BURNE-JONES: "THE ANNUNCIATION"

his designs for stained glass and in the figure of the Angel Gabriel in the picture under discussion, the treatment is inspired by Gothic sculpture. Still later, as in the "Dies Domini," and in the mosaics which he did for the Church of the Holy Trinity at Rome, and, partly, in the "Sponsa di Libano," he has gone back to the Byzantines for his inspiration. Now all this may be justifiable enough, but it certainly gives some cause, if not reason, for criticism. In the case of the mosaics it is certainly largely justifiable, though one may think that the imitation is pushed unnecessarily far, and that the archaic little angels, with their pointed toes, hanging down from the centre of the dome, are rather ridiculous, while the Christ might be as severely decorative and impressive without his curiously ruffled-looking gown. In the "Dies Domini," again, the peculiar pose of the feet, with the ankles drawn together and the toes turned out, and the bad foreshortening, seems to us little less than deliberate affectation without any gain whatever. In this figure, as in the "Sponsa di Libano," the drapery, too, might have had all the composition of line without such rigidity of fold and lack of modelling. The imitation of Byzantine stiffness is pushed to an extreme in the figures of angels in the window in St. Peter's Church, Vere Street, London, where the whole figure is stretched out into impossible length and straightness, the draperies are subdivided into innumerable rigid lines, and the wings are not only unnatural

in form, but positively ugly and undecorative as well. The drawing of the legs of Mars in one of the designs representing the Seasons is equally meaninglessly archaic.

But when all is said—when one has fully admitted that he is imitative and mannered, that his figures are wonderfully long and thin, that his heads habitually lean forward at nearly a right angle with the spine, that his lack of early training makes his drawing of the nude feebly round and unaccented, that his repetitions of hungry eyes and hollow cheeks and prominent chins are somewhat wearisome, that his types, both of men and women, are epicene—Burne-Jones remains one of the most remarkable creative artists of the nineteenth century, and a man of great and undoubted power and originality of design.

MEISSONIER

BY the average person who possesses some knowledge of modern painting, extreme minuteness of detail is probably considered as the most pronounced characteristic and the greatest merit of Meissonier's art. "Finished like a Meissonier," is a proverbial phrase with such persons, and they are apt to imagine that the qualities of eye and hand which rendered such minuteness possible, and the vast industry which achieved it, are the principal elements in Meissonier's fame and the cause of the phenomenal prices his works attained. That minuteness and laborious finish are a part of the commercial value of these works it would be absurd to deny, but it may be affirmed that they have practically nothing to do with the painter's artistic reputation. Mere minuteness and the evidence of labour will always have their effect on prices, but they will never make a man Member of the Institute, Grand Officer of the Legion of Honour, or President of the Société Nationale des Beaux-Arts. The extreme "finish" of Meissonier's work is in reality mainly the outcome of a physical peculiarity or defect—extreme shortness of sight. In

his essay on Bonnat in Van Dyke's "Modern French Masters," Mr. Blashfield relates how that master, sitting next to M. Maspero at a great dinner one night, said to him:

"'Maspero, you who are so near-sighted, tell me how does M——, away down there at the foot of the table, appear to you?'

"'Well,' replied M. Maspero, 'I see a white spot, which I know is his shirt-front, and a flesh-colored spot, which I know is his face.'

"'Ah,' cried Bonnat, 'how I wish my pupils could see things in that way!'"

Now it is noticeable that the near-sighted men who really "see things in that way" never paint them so, and the reason is not far to seek. Their manner of painting is conditioned less on what they see in nature than on what they see upon their canvas. All "broad" work in painting—all free and large handling—is intended only for distant effect, and becomes unintelligible when seen near by. The near-sighted painter cannot see his picture at all at the distance for which such painting is intended, and all his work is therefore calculated for close inspection, and is consequently clean, smooth, and detailed in the extreme. If the painter is exceptionally near-sighted, it may even happen that he paints pictures calculated for a nearer vision than is possible to the average human eye, and which can be seen properly only by the aid of a glass. So we have the paradox that those who

see least detail in nature, with unaided vision, are precisely those who paint most, and it is the short-sighted and purblind painters who astonish us with their amazing sharpness of delineation. The lengthening of the visual focus in age, as well as growth of mastery and impatience of little things, may well be one of the reasons for the greater breadth of style in the late work of all great painters. Certain it is that even Meissonier's miracles of minuteness are works of his early time, and that while he never became a broad painter (in the purely technical sense), yet his later works seem more capable of imitation by a normal human being than do his earlier. Boldini, though always much freer in touch, was once as fond of a small scale and almost as minute as Meissonier himself. He now paints the size of life and with a large brush.

While the small scale and microscopic workmanship of Meissonier's pictures may therefore be treated as, in a sense, accidental, and while his real merits would have been the same if he had habitually worked in the size of life, yet it is also true that the scale reacted on the manner, and in a way peculiarly suited to the genius of the artist. Meissonier has himself stated with great clearness a truth familiar to all painters, but perhaps not so well known to the public. He says:

"The smaller the scale of one's picture, the more boldly the *relief* must be brought out. The larger

the scale, the more it must be softened and diminished. This is an absolutely indispensable rule. A life-size figure treated like one of my small ones would be unendurable."

He does not attempt to give any reason for this rule, and the effort to find one would take us too far afield. The reader must be content, for the present, to accept the fact that this rule exists. Its acceptance will help in the understanding of Meissonier's work, and of the way in which the accident of scale coöperated with the temperament of the painter to produce the style we know so well.

This style was formed in all its essentials singularly early. From the very first the great little pictures seem as masterly as anything their author afterwards produced. His life was a long one, and was filled with untiring study and industry, yet he never did things better than he did at first; he only did other things as well. How this quite prodigious mastery was attained so early is a mystery. It would almost seem as if this artist had never had to learn, had had no period of uncertainty and struggle—had almost been born a master. His subjects change, but not his manner. From the beginning of his career to the end the conception of art is identical, the methods are the same, the achievement is almost uniform.

It may even be doubted if some of Meissonier's earlier work is not the best that he has left, merely because the subjects and the scale of that work are

admirably fitted for the display of his qualities and the minimising of his limitations. It is the admirable series of "Smokers" and "Readers," "Painters" and "Connoisseurs," which give the fullest measure of his powers and the least hint of his shortcomings; which made his reputation and perhaps are likeliest to maintain it. These pictures are in the purest vein of genre painting, and immediately suggest comparison with the wonderful little masters of Holland. At first Meissonier was considered as a reviver of Dutch art, and that he was a great admirer of that art there can be no doubt. Upon examination, however, it soon becomes evident that the differences between him and his models are as great as the resemblances. First of these differences is a fundamental one of point of view. The Dutch masters were pure painters, and their subjects were strictly contemporary. They contented themselves with looking about them and painting what interested them in what they saw. Meissonier only two or three times treated contemporary subjects, and then when something intensely dramatic or historically important attracted him. You would look in vain in his work for any such record of the ordinary life of the nineteenth century as the Dutchmen have given us of that of the seventeenth. Meissonier was such a master of the antiquarianism he practised—he managed to enter so thoroughly within the skin of his two or three favourite epochs—that he almost deceives us at times; but he was nevertheless

essentially an antiquarian, and therefore, his art never has the spontaneity of the old work.

Another difference is in the quality of drawing. Meissonier was a wonderfully accurate draughtsman. His drawing is composed of equal parts of remarkably clear and accurate vision and of deep scientific acquirement. It is not the drawing of the great stylists, the masters of beautiful and significant line, but it is marvellously forceful and just. The drawing of Ter Borch is equally accurate, but seems to have no formula, no method, no ascertainable knowledge behind it. It seems unconscious and naïve in a way which that of Meissonier never approaches. Finally, in colour and in the management of light, Meissonier cannot be compared to any one of half-a-dozen Dutch painters. His tone is almost always a little hot and reddish or, as the painters say, "foxy"; his handling a little dry. Sometimes in interiors with only one or two figures his realistic force of imitation of that which was before him almost carried him to a fine rendering even of light and colour. He had built his picture before he painted it, putting every object that was to appear upon the canvas in its proper place, and had only to copy what was directly under his eye, and he did this so well as almost to become a colourist and a luminist. It is only when he tries to paint open-air subjects and larger compositions that his defects become very apparent.

His merits are all to be included in the two great

ones of thoroughness and accuracy. He never shirked any difficulty or avoided any study, was never formless or undecided or vague. His knowledge of costume and furniture was only less wonderful than his grasp of character and his perfect rendering of form. He was a thorough realist, with little imagination and less sense of beauty, but with an insatiable appetite for and a marvellous digestion of concrete fact. His work is amazing in its industry, but his industry never becomes mere routine. His detail is never mere finikin particularity of touch, but is patient investigation of truth. At his best he is hardly sufficiently to be admired; but he awakens only admiration, never emotion. His drawing is absolute, his relief startling, he almost gives the illusion of nature; but he never evokes a vision of beauty or charms one into a dream.

Meissonier's qualities are fully sufficient to account for the admiration of the public and the universal respect of his brother artists; and as long as he was content to be a genre painter they were sufficient to make him easily the first genre painter of his time, if not quite, as he has been called, the "greatest genre painter of any age." In his later work they are less sufficient. He became ambitious, he wanted to be a great historical painter, to paint a "Napoleonic Cycle," to decorate the walls of the Panthéon. He transferred his personages to the open air, he enlarged his canvases and multiplied his figures, he attempted

violent movement. His methods, which had been admirably suited to the production of almost perfect little pictures of tranquil indoor life, were not so adequate to the rendering of his new themes. His prodigious industry, his exhaustive accuracy, his vigour, and his conscientiousness were as great as ever, but the most exact study of nature in detail would not give the effect of open air, the most rigorous scientific analysis of the movements of the horse would not make him move, the accumulation of small figures would not look like an army. It was in vain that he built a railway to follow the action of a galloping horse, or bought a grain field that he might see just what it would be like when a squadron had charged through it. What he produced may possibly be demonstrably true, but it does not look true.

The best of these more ambitious works is perhaps the "1814." The worst is certainly the "1807," which has found a home in the Metropolitan Museum. This picture is almost an entire failure, and yet it possesses every one of the qualities which made Meissonier's greatness in as high a degree as any earlier work. The industry, the strenuous exactness, the thoroughness, the impeccable draughtsmanship, the sharpness of relief, are all here at their greatest. The amount of labour that the picture represents is simply appalling, and it is almost all wasted because it is not the kind of labour that was wanted. On all these figures not a gaiter-button is wanting, and the total result of

all this addition of detail is simple chaos. The idea of the composition is fine, but the effect is missed. Looked at close at hand, each head, each hand, each strap and buckle is masterly, but, at a distance sufficiently great to permit the whole canvas to be taken in at one glance, nothing is seen but a meaningless glitter. It is not only true that a life-size figure treated like one of Meissonier's small ones "would be unendurable," but it is equally true that a great number of such small figures will not make a large picture. The sharp and hard detail which was in place in his early canvases is fatal to the unity and breadth necessary to a large composition. It is equally fatal to the sense of movement. The "Smokers" and "Readers" were doing as little as possible, and one felt that one had plenty of time to notice their coat-buttons and the smallest details of their costume; the cuirassiers of "1807" are dashing by at a furious gallop, and the eye resents the realisation of detail that it could not possibly perceive. Even if the action of the horses in the picture were correct (and, for once, it is not), nothing could make them move when the eye is thus arrested by infinitesimal minutiæ.

Meissonier was a man of sound common sense, and of immense strength of purpose and capacity for labour; very vigorous, very determined and tenacious, and very vain, whose bulldog pluck and energy carried him to the highest point of material success in his profession. Within his limits he was an almost

perfect painter, and even when he overstepped them his terrible conscientiousness in the exercise of great ability will always merit deep respect. He thoroughly earned the honours he received, the fortune he acquired and squandered, and the immortality of which he is reasonably certain.

BAUDRY

IT is natural and right that the artists we most heartily admire should be those of the greatest original force, and that we should glorify the men who have revolted from prevalent traditions, and in spite of the schools, have made new discoveries or initiated new movements. Some of us, indeed, are apt to denounce the schools and the whole academic system as altogether useless, and even those who might be willing to admit that, as Lady Dilke has very truly observed, "the very antagonists of this system have owed to its method and discipline more than half their practical strength," may find it hard to be wholly just to an artist of academic mind and of classical tendencies and training. Such an artist was Paul Baudry, a shining example of what the schools and the governmental encouragement of art can produce, in the normal and regular course of their action, if the right material be given them to work upon. His education, his opportunity, and his reward were given him by the state; and if the organisation of art under state control, as it exists in France, had resulted in nothing else, the decorations in the Foyer of the Paris Grand Opéra might almost serve as its sufficient justification.

Baudry's biographer, M. Charles Ephrussi, tells us that Paul-Jacques-Aimé Baudry, the third of twelve children of a Breton sabot-maker, was born on November 27, 1828, at Roche-sur-Yon, in Vendée. His father was a great lover of music and wished Paul to become a professional musician, but the child's vocation for painting was early apparent, and at the age of thirteen he began the serious study of his art under the direction of Antoine Sartoris, the drawing-master of the town, an artisan whose love for painting had pushed him into the practice of art, and who had managed to secure two years' instruction in Paris. With him Baudry remained three years, and toward this humble instructor he always exhibited a profound gratitude. To the end of Baudry's life the name of Sartoris figured beside that of Drolling, in the catalogue of the Salon, after that of their pupil. The young man's progress was rapid, and Sartoris soon felt that he could teach him no more. Study in Paris was necessary for him, and, on the recommendation of Sartoris and other friends, the town of Roche-sur-Yon voted him a pension of six hundred francs, which was shortly added to by the Council-General of La Vendée. He entered the studio of Drolling in 1844, and was soon recognised as the head of the school. He lived upon the meagerest of fare, and worked with indomitable industry and energy, determined to deserve the encouragement he had received, and his student years were marked by a succession of prizes

and medals until in 1847, he was received *en loge* for the Prix de Rome, and was awarded a *premier second grand prix* before he was quite nineteen years old. The Grand Prix of that year was Lenepveu, who was given, after Baudry's death, his unfulfilled commission for the decorative paintings for the Panthéon commemorating the life and death of Jeanne d'Arc. Baudry's pension was again augmented, and with renewed confidence he went on with the struggle toward the first goal of his ambition, that Grand Prix which, in the absence of any private resources, was so necessary to him. He failed twice, but succeeded the third time, and from 1850 the nation took the place of the town and the department as his patron. The Prix de Rome can seldom have fallen to so young a man, and when he revisited Rome in 1864 as one of the foremost of French artists he found men of his own age among the *pensionnaires* of the Villa Medici.

The five years that Baudry spent in Rome left a deep mark upon all his after work. Curiously enough the Institute, which had sent him there, presumably, that he might study the old masters, was offended when the influence of Raphael and Correggio began to be noticeable in his painting, but the public was of another mind. From Rome he sent home to Paris successively "Theseus in the Labyrinth,"—which he afterwards destroyed,—"Jacob and the Angel," "Fortune and the Child," now in the Luxembourg,

the copy of Raphael's "Jurisprudence" which is preserved in the École des Beaux Arts, and the "Punishment of a Vestal," now in the museum at Lille. The "Fortune" and the "Vestal," together with some smaller pictures and portraits, were exhibited in the Salon of 1857, shortly after his return to France, and his success was instantaneous and complete. He was awarded a medal of the first class by the jury, and was acclaimed a leader among the younger artists. Commissions flowed in upon him, and the next few years brought forth a number of portraits and easel pictures, of which "The Wave and the Pearl" (1863) is the most exquisite, and marks the apogee of his early manner. Meanwhile he had begun his career as a decorator by a series of works for private patrons. In the best of these, "The Five Cities of Italy," executed in 1861, for the Duc de Galliera, the future Baudry is already discernible. In this year also he was made a Chevalier of the Legion of Honour.

When the building of the Paris Grand Opéra was undertaken Baudry was naturally marked out for a great share in its decoration, for the only man who might have done it as well, Puvis de Chavannes, though his senior by four years, was as yet comparatively unknown. The commission for the work in the foyer was given to Baudry in 1865, but he had been informed of the probability of his receiving it by his comrade of Roman days, Garnier, the architect, a year in advance, and had gone to Rome to prepare

for the great work by making a series of full-sized copies from Michelangelo's frescoes in the Sistine Chapel. In 1868 he went to London to copy the Hampton Court cartoons, and in 1870 to Italy again, still with his work for the Opéra in view. In 1869 he was created an Officer of the Legion, and in 1870, during his absence, he was elected to the Institute without having announced his candidacy, made the customary visits, or taken any steps whatever to secure the result. In the same year he volunteered for the defence of his country, and carried a musket through the war with Germany. After the conclusion of peace and the putting down of the Commune he returned to his task, and for three years lived in the opera house itself, partly from motives of economy, shut up with his work and seeing no one. The great paintings were finally completed and exhibited at the École des Beaux Arts in 1874. "The success was splendid. The French school counted another great master." For the work of eight years he was paid 140,000 francs, and a great part of it he did literally for nothing, to prevent its being given to another artist with the consequent destruction of the unity of his great decorative scheme.

Worn out with his long labour, he started for a tour of Egypt and Greece, from which he returned a Commander of the Legion, and "the most famous and the poorest of the artists of France." In 1876 he was commissioned to decorate the Panthéon with a

series of pictures from the life of Jeanne d'Arc, and accepted the task with enthusiasm. He had long thought of the subject, and was profoundly interested in the great French heroine. Unfortunately, he could not afford to devote his time to work so wretchedly paid (the whole series was to bring in only 50,000 francs), and he was obliged to accept other commissions for portraits, easel pictures, and minor decorations. A series of brilliant canvases was the result, but that which he intended for the crowning work of his life was never begun. A few of the more notable of his later works are the portrait of General Comte de Palikao, 1876; the "Glorification of the Law" for the Court of Cassation, exhibited in the Salon of 1881, and unanimously awarded the medal of honour (then for the first time given by vote of all the qualified exhibitors); the "St. Hubert" for Chantilly, and the two ceilings for the houses of W. H. and Cornelius Vanderbilt, in 1882; the portrait of Mme. Bernstein and her son, 1883; and his last great work, "L'Enlèvement de Psyché," for Chantilly, 1884. To these should be added the "Diana driving away Love," of which the first version was executed at Rome in 1864, but which he repeated in 1877, in 1879, and in 1882. He died of heart disease in the fifty-eighth year of his age, on the 17th of January, 1886.

One is constantly reminded of Raphael when one is contemplating the life and work of Paul Baudry, not merely because of the great influence of the

Italian of the Renaissance upon the modern Frenchman, but because of the striking similarity of the two artistic natures. Both were men of indomitable energy and vast industry; both were brilliantly precocious, and rapidly acquired all the knowledge of their epoch; both were of the true classical temper, preferring beauty to character and perfection to individuality. Like Raphael, Baudry was a man of sweet temper and sunny nature, and like Raphael he was entirely devoted to his art, and had scarce any other life than his work. No more than Raphael was he one of the profoundly personal natures in whom the man seems more than the artist. He was one of those *absorbents*, of whom Raphael is the chief, whose work is rather to do perfectly what every one else has been trying to do, than to do something unlike anything that has gone before. He borrowed from Raphael and from the antique as freely as Raphael himself borrowed from his predecessors, and he managed, like Raphael, to stamp his own seal upon what he borrowed, so that his very impersonality has a noble individuality. It would be impossible to take any work by Baudry for the production of any other artist.

Like Raphael, also, Baudry had many successive manners, and never rested in any one acquired style. Of his early work, before he went to Rome, I know nothing personally, but we are told that it is marked by a certain crude and almost brutal vigour rather

than by refinement or style. His first *envoi de Rome*, the "Theseus," is said to have shown the influence of Caravaggio. In his second *envoi*, however, the "Jacob and the Angel," the influence of Raphael begins to show itself. He now began his travels over Italy, filling his portfolios with studies after the great masters, and the effect is immediately apparent in his work. Correggio made a profound and lasting impression upon him, and the "Fortune and the Child" is a frank imitation of Titian with a reminiscence of Leonardo in the expression of the lovely head. In the fourth year of his pension he was obliged by the rule to make a copy after an old master containing "at least three figures" and it is characteristic of him that he should have chosen the "Jurisprudence," thus giving himself eight figures to do instead of three. Raphael's "Jurisprudence" is the perfect work of the perfect time of that master. It is the smallest of the four great frescoes painted in the Stanza della Segnatura, and, in the opinion of Baudry, has "a breadth of style and execution not to be found in the 'Disputa' or the 'School of Athens.'" It was in copying this picture that Baudry really learned his art. "In the silent conversations we have held together he has taught me the secret of his grace and of his admirable style," he says, and again: "How I love him since I have studied him, and what secrets of harmony and of colour he has revealed to me! Blind, or rather silly, are those who cannot see it."

Baudry has been allowed to be a charming colourist even by not over-enthusiastic critics, and his testimony to the colour quality of Raphael at his best is noteworthy. Not only did the study of Raphael involved in the making of this copy influence all Baudry's production thereafter, but reminiscences of this special picture are frequent in his work, from the "Five Cities of Italy" to the "Glorification of the Law."

From his return to Paris in 1856 to his death the work of Baudry may be divided into three categories, and into three periods. He painted portraits, easel pictures, and decorations, and he painted each of these in three different manners. Of course the changes of style cannot be marked off accurately as having occurred at given dates, but in a general view they are clearly enough apparent. The portraits of his first period are marked by exquisite and accurate drawing, by profound study of character, and by an enamel-like smoothness and unity of surface. Two which I remember especially are those of Guizot and of Madeleine Brohan. That of the celebrated actress is particularly beautiful and neither Holbein nor Raphael himself, one of the greatest of portrait-painters, ever did anything more perfect or more impersonal, more marked by the suppression of visible means and the entire submission of the artist to the individuality of the sitter. The easel pictures of the same period are less ivory-hard than the portraits, are richer and

fuller in colour and texture, but they are marked by the same reserve and mystery of technique. The best of them is "The Wave and the Pearl," which remains, perhaps, the most perfect painting of the nude done in the last century. The unconventional grace of attitude, the plump slenderness of the firm young body, the charming head with its side-long glance over the dimpled shoulder—one sees these first, and then one notes the infinite sauvity of subtle line, the absolute but unostentatious science of the drawing, the nacreous loveliness of the colour, the solid yet mysterious modelling, almost without light and shade, the perfection of delicate surface. These things make it a pure masterpiece, and one feels that it is possible to do something different—it is not possible to do anything better. The decorations of this period are preludes to the Opéra, and hardly require special consideration.

The middle period of Baudry's work includes the decoration of the Opéra and a number of portraits, but no easel pictures of importance, unless the first version of the "Diana," painted at Rome while the copies of Michelangelo were in progress, be counted. I have not seen it and cannot speak of its quality, but, at the time, it was thought to show a falling off from previous work. The portraits show a growing breadth of style and handling, are often of superb dignity and great power, splendidly rich in sombre tone. One I remember—the name of the sitter has

quite escaped me—which seemed almost a fitting companion to Titian's "Man with the Glove." The first fruits of Baudry's assiduous study of Michelangelo are shown in the ceiling painted for Count Henckel-Donnersmarck in 1865. It is distinctly Michelangelesque, and the heavy-limbed figures seem too colossal for the space they occupy. This was but a temporary phase of his work, however. The "Muses" of the Opéra show the same influence in a much modified form and thereafter it is seen no more.

The decorations of the Grand Opéra must always remain Baudry's greatest work and his principal title to permanent fame. The original commission was for the twelve compositions in the *voussures* or vaulting panels, and the ten ovals representing the music of various nations. To these Baudry himself demanded and obtained the right of adding, without compensation, the three great ceiling panels and the eight panels of the "Muses," that his scheme might be completely carried out and the decorative unity of the whole assured. The work thus comprises thirty-three separate compositions, all of them large and some vast, and it is calculated that the whole space covered with painting comprises five hundred square meters. In size and completeness alone this great scheme of decoration is the most important carried out by one man since the great days of the Renaissance. Its intellectual merit in the choice and treatment of subject is very great and has been much

enlarged upon. Neither its size nor its meaning is, however, what we are now concerned with. Its purely artistic merit is what we have to consider, and that merit is of a very high order. In this work Baudry has shown himself one of the great masters of decorative art, though his method bears little resemblance to that of our other great modern decorator, Puvis de Chavannes. His problem was, in the first place, altogether different. These paintings are intended for an opera house, where elegance and richness are more appropriate than austerity, and they are surrounded by heavy architectural ornaments and rich gilding rather than by flat gray walls. If he had lived to execute his designs for the Panthéon, the two greatest decorators of the century would have met upon the same ground, and the result of the competition would have been interesting to see. As it is it may be said that each triumphantly solved the problem set him, and that Puvis's "St. Geneviève" is as thoroughly in place in the Panthéon as is Baudry's "Judgment of Paris" in the Opéra. Baudry's reliance is, like that of the Florentines, on balanced linear composition and perfection of drawing. Light and shade is only so far developed as is necessary for the explanation of form, and colour, while charming, is strictly subordinated. This subordination of light and shade and of colour assures a sufficient decorative flatness, while the rhythm of beautiful lines becomes the principal decorative element, and makes of each

BAUDRY: "PASTORAL MUSIC"

picture a pattern far finer and more subtle than pure ornament. Of his power of linear composition no better example could be given than that known as "The Shepherds" or "Pastoral Music," an admirable piece of ordered, balanced, supple line, concise yet free and graceful, full of tranquil dignity and beauty. In strong contrast is "The Assault" or "Military Music," in which a system of abrupt and angular lines, radiating from the centre and forcing the figures out to the edges of the frame as if a bomb had exploded in the midst of them, expresses the fury of war as completely as idyllic peace is expressed by the concentric curves and pyramidal grouping of "The Shepherds." The larger and more crowded compositions of the two great panels at the ends of the hall are as masterly as any of the smaller ones, and the whole series demonstrates that in classical composition Baudry has had few equals. Of his power of significant drawing one must speak in terms of highest praise, and I am inclined to place him very high indeed among the few great delineators of the human figure. I do not know why the world has been apt to consider colour as a gift and drawing as only an acquirement. Mere correctness of proportion and measurement may indeed be learned by any one with a true eye and sufficient industry, but the gift of significant line is one of the rarest of artistic endowments, and is compatible, as Michelangelo has shown us, with the neglect of mere accuracy. Baudry's drawing is not always

accurate, but it is intelligent and significant in the highest degree, and is instinct with what we know as style. The original crayon studies for the figures of the Opéra decorations have been published, and are lessons forever. Look, for instance, at the marvellous rendering of the action of the Juno for "The Judgment of Paris," at the long lines of the back and the sharp turn of the hip; see how each point of structure is accounted for, each bone and muscle placed, yet without exaggeration or over-insistence; note the unexpectedness of the forms brought out and yet their supreme beauty and graciousness, the elegance of every line and the living grace of the whole elastic figure. This is drawing as the great masters of line have understood it—as no one save Baudry, in our day, has practised it.

After the completion of the Opéra, Baudry returned to his easel pictures and portraits, but his work is now very different from that of his early period. M. Jules Breton seems to consider it inferior and says: "The fine even colouring of his earlier pictures had crumbled into sharp, dry hatchings . . . his painting, properly speaking, was on the decline." This seems to me an error, or, at least an overstatement. The habit of working on a large scale and over vast surfaces had undoubtedly broken up the united texture of his early work and given his brush a new freedom. Never again was he to produce such a mysteriously perfect piece of painting as

"The Wave and the Pearl." But one might as well object to the later work of Velasquez or Hals or Titian as to that of Baudry. The technique is different, but it is quite as wonderful as ever, and in some of his latest works reaches the virtuosity of a Stevens or a Boldini. One of the first things he painted after the completion of the great decorations was the portrait of the Comte de Palikao standing by his horse in the open air, as elegant as a Van Dyck, as free as a Velasquez, and, besides, a thoroughly modern study of light. It puzzled the beholders at the time, but triumphed splendidly at the Universal Exposition in 1889. The later versions of the "Diana driving away Love" are painted with the same sweeping freedom, with all the cleverness of the cleverest modern, but retain the sense of form and the structural knowledge which were Baudry's alone. The beautiful action of this figure is, indeed, one of Baudry's most happy inventions—or discoveries. Still later the drawing also is a little sacrificed, and even the study of character in portraiture, but the dazzling brilliancy of handling, and the charm of light and colour, become more and more pronounced. The later decorations show the same change, and suffer from it, in my opinion, more than the smaller works. The gravity of monumental art, which is somewhat lacking in the "Glorification of the Law," is not altogether compensated for by the gaiety of facile execution or the dainty charm of colour that satisfy us in the little

"Truth," or the delicious portraits of Madame Bernstein and her son, and of the boy Louis de Montebello.

Take him for all in all Paul Baudry was, perhaps, the most rounded and complete of the painters of the nineteenth century. He was the greatest stylist, the greatest draughtsman, and the greatest master of composition, and if he had not been one of the greatest decorators he would still have been one of the greatest portrait-painters of his time. He was a fine colourist and he became one of the most brilliant of technicians. With all this he has been somewhat grudgingly praised by critics, and his influence upon other painters has been comparatively slight because he was not one of the great original forces of modern art. It did, indeed, require a certain originality to found one's art upon Raphael at a time when Raphael's work was little understood, and it is also true that there is an unmistakable air of the nineteenth century about everything he did, so that even his massive muses are essentially *parisiennes;* still he was not a Millet, nor even a Manet, not a profound poet or a revolutionary initiator of a new movement. His art is essentially academic and of the Institute, but it is so accomplished that compared with it that of most of our modern artists seems bungling and clumsy or thin and flippant. Such perfection as he achieved is perhaps even rarer than striking individuality. There are always original, unbalanced, one-sided

artists, and some of them do some one thing supremely well and mark a new epoch or found a new school. We are right to admire them, but we may also admire the artist who is wholly sound and sane and classic and whose only aim is the creation of beauty.

PUVIS DE CHAVANNES

THOUGH he died in 1898, an old man covered with honours, Puvis de Chavannes is still one of the most vital influences of contemporary art, still a leader of the young school, still one of the most discussed and criticised of artists. It is worth some pains to try to understand such a man, and whoever would study him aright should visit the little provincial museum at Amiens. Much of his finest work is in Paris, and several other French cities and one American city possess important paintings by him, but only in Amiens is there a series of great decorations by him beginning with almost his earliest effort in this line, following with the rapidly maturing works of the next few years, in which the formation and growth of his method and style are plainly to be traced, and ending with a work of his full maturity. Nowhere else in the world can you find such material for the study of the aims and methods of one of the two greatest artists in a great branch of art that the nineteenth century produced.

I have called decoration a great branch of art; I might, perhaps, have called it the greatest of all. This is a realistic age, and the easel-picture has been

its most characteristic artistic production. For many, a painting had come to seem a record of fact, differing only a little from a photograph, and was thought of as a thing isolated and portable, a thing *per se*, and only degraded when it was forced into service and subordinated to an architectural whole. We expected painters to produce for us works of art which should have no relation to anything else, which should be whole and self-sufficing; and then we proceeded to put these works of art together in a gallery, where each one fought with all the others, and a thousand conflicting relations were at once established. It was not so that art was understood in the ages of great production. In Greece each statue was destined for a given pediment or a given niche; in Italy each picture frescoed a given wall, or was an altarpiece for a particular altar. The artist might carve the front of the Parthenon or paint the ceiling of the Sistine, or he might, as Benvenuto did, ornament a salt-cellar or twist the handle of a dagger or a spoon; but his art was always art in service—it was always the decoration of something which might exist without its aid.

All art is, indeed, in a sense, decorative. Facts and the records of facts are but the raw material of art; the art itself is in the arrangement. It is harmony and order that make art, whether the harmony be that of line or colour or light and shade; only the easel-painter is given a piece of canvas to decorate with ordered lines and colours, and must limit his har-

mony to that, with such help as his gilt frame may give him,—he must trust to chance for everything else,—whereas to the decorator, properly so called, a whole church or a whole palace is one great work of art, of which his picture is a part only; and instead of confining himself within the frame, he has to harmonise what he does with the whole about it. A more difficult problem, but not without its advantages. For, the work once done, there it is forever in the light it was painted for and in the surroundings it was meant to fit, and not at the mercy of the chance contrasts of the exhibition or the gallery, where each musician plays his own tune, with the natural result of clash and discord. If we have begun to understand and to practise this larger style of art again it is largely owing to the life-work of Puvis de Chavannes.

Pierre-Cecile Puvis de Chavannes was born at Lyons on December 14, 1824. His family is a very old one, which can trace its authentic history as far back as 1152. One of his ancestors married Catherine de Coligny, who belonged to the same family as the great admiral. Puvis was the second artist of his race, for the Louvre contains a landscape called "The Shepherds," by Pierre-Domachin, Sieur de Chavannes, who was received into the Academy in 1709, and died in 1744, at the age of seventy-two years. The family takes its name from its place of origin, Chavannes-sur-Suran, commune of the canton of Tréport.

Puvis began the study of art, first under Henri Scheffer, brother of the more celebrated Ary Scheffer, then under Couture, but did not stay long with either master. He soon began to work independently, and formed his taste by a journey to Italy. After many unsuccessful efforts in different styles he was attracted to the study of decorative art by the sight of some blank panels in the dining-room of his brother's country house. One of the pictures he painted for them was afterward enlarged and exhibited, under the title of "Return from Hunting" in the salon of 1859. Two years later he exhibited the "War" and "Peace," his first great successes. They were much criticised, but found an able defender in Théophile Gautier, who, with a discrimination which he often showed, praised them warmly. They received the award of a second-class medal from the jury, and were bought by the state and subsequently placed in the museum of Amiens, where they now are. Like all his decorations, they are painted on canvas in oil colors with a mixture of wax, and were fastened to the wall with white lead. At Amiens, also, is most of the work of the next few years—"Work" and "Rest" painted in 1863; "Ave, Picardia Nutrix" in 1865; and two small grisailles, "Vigilance" and "Fancy," in 1866, which completed this magnificent series of early works. In 1864 he exhibited at the Salon an "Autumn," for which he received a third-class medal. At the Universal Exposition of 1867 he was represented by

reductions of "War," "Peace," "Work," and "Rest," and by another canvas "Sleep." Here he gained another third-class medal, and was given the red ribbon of the Legion of Honour. From that time his position was assured, his victory gained. He was constantly a member of the Salon juries and art commissions, and his life was a series of new triumphs and of new commissions for the decoration of public buildings. Let us now pass his work rapidly in review: 1868, "Play," for the Cercle de l'Union Artistique; 1869, "Massilia, Greek Colony," and "Marseilles, Gate of the East," for the staircase of the museum of Marseilles; 1870, "The Beheading of John the Baptist," and "Magdalen in the Desert"; 1872, "Hope"; 1873, "Summer"; 1874, "Charles Martel's Victory over the Saracens," for the hôtel-de-ville of Poitiers; 1875, "St. Radegonde Protecting Education," for the same building, and a "Fisherman's Family." In 1876 and 1877 he painted his well-known decorations for the Panthéon, dealing with the infancy of St. Geneviève, and for these he was made an Officer of the Legion. In 1879 he exhibited "The Prodigal Son" and "Girls by the Seashore," and in 1880 "Ludus pro Patria," for Amiens again, where it stands opposite the "Ave, Picardia Nutrix," painted fifteen years before. In 1881 came one of his rare easel-pictures, "The Poor Fisherman," which now hangs in the gallery of the Luxembourg, where it was placed in 1877, his "Sleep" being bought for the museum at Lille at the same time. In

1882 he exhibited "Doux Pays" (a title I shall not try to translate), painted for the house of M. Léon Bonnat, and for this work he received the medal of honour by vote of the majority of qualified exhibitors. In 1883 he showed "The Dream," "A Woman at her Toilet," and a "Portrait of Mlle. M. C."; and in 1884 the first of a series of decorations for the museum of his native city of Lyons, the lovely "Sacred Wood, dear to the Arts and the Muses," followed in 1885 by "Autumn," a variation on the earlier picture of that name, and in 1886 by "Antique Vision," "Christian Inspiration," and "The Rhone and the Saone," symbols respectively of the form, of sentiment, and of force and grace. The next two years were occupied with the great hemicycle for the Sorbonne, probably his finest work, which was completed in 1889, in which year he was made a Commander of the Legion. In 1890 came the schism out of which grew the new Salon, known as the Champ-de-Mars, but properly called the Société Nationale des Beaux Arts. Puvis was one of the promoters of this movement, and, upon the death of Meissonier in 1891, became its president, which office he held until his death. At this new Salon he exhibited, in 1891, "Inter Artes et Naturam," for the Rouen museum, two smaller panels for the same, "Pottery" and "Ceramics," and "Summer" for the hôtel-de-ville of Paris; in 1892, "Winter," also for the hôtel-de-ville; and, in 1894, a whole series for the prefect's staircase in the same building,

the ceiling representing "Victor Hugo Offering his Lyre to the City of Paris," while allegories of "Patriotism," "Charity," etc., fill the ten pedentives. In 1895 he also exhibited there the great panel now in its permanent place at the head of the main stairway of the Boston Public Library. To this bald list of his exhibited work one must add the exhibition, in many cases, of the cartoons of his great decorations before the colour was added; the "Victor Hugo," for instance, having been exhibited thus at the Champ-de-Mars in 1893. Among his latest works are another painting for the Panthéon, dealing with the later life of St. Geneviève and the panels which completed the decorations of the staircase hall of the Boston Library.

The art of Puvis de Chavannes is certainly of a sort to be "caviare to the general." It has been said to be the negation of everything that has always been counted art, and to be based on the omissions of drawing, modelling, light and shade, and even colour. On the other hand, his admirers think him a master of drawing in his own style, and certainly a master of colour. To explain these seeming contradictions, to show the reason of the omissions in his work, which did not arise from ignorance, but were distinctly wilful, to exhibit his qualities and give a reason for his fame is the task I have set myself.

To begin with, one must remember that Puvis is above all things a decorator, and that his work cannot be properly judged except in place. It does not

show to good advantage in an exhibition, where it is necessarily placed in contrast with works done on radically different principles. I have often felt disappointed with a canvas by him when I saw it in the Salon; but I have seldom seen one of his decorations in the surroundings for which it was intended without being struck with its fitness and the perfection with which it served its purpose. His "Poor Fisherman," hung as an easel-picture among the other easel-pictures in the Luxembourg, seems almost ludicrous. It was said of Millet's peasants that they were too poor to afford folds in their garments; here the poverty seems even more abject, and drawing and colour seem equally beyond its resources. Transfer the contest to his own ground, however, and see how Puvis in turn triumphs over those who, in a gallery, utterly crush him by their greater strength and brilliancy of technique. Go to the Panthéon and look at the mural pictures executed there by many of the foremost of the French painters, and I think you will feel that there is just one of them that looks like a true decoration, exactly fitted for the place it occupies and the architecture that surrounds it, and that that one is Puvis de Chavannes's. By contrast with it, Cabanel's looks affected and Bonnat's brutal, and many of the others become entirely insignificant. By dint of sheer strength and severity of style Laurens holds his own better than any one else; but his great compositions do not keep their place on the wall, as do those of Puvis, but cut through it. In

colour some of these decorations look bright and gaudy, some look black and heavy; in form some look pompous and turbulent, some coarse and realistic, some slight and languid. Puvis's drawing, with all its omissions, is austere and noble; and his pale tints, which have been called the denial of colour, look here like the only true colour, absolute in harmony, a part of the building itself—the delicate efflorescence, as it were, of the gray walls.

Then go to the Sorbonne and look at the hemicycle and compare the effect of its dead tones and rude drawing with that of Galland's apparently much more learned work in the panels of the ceiling, and ask yourself if the result is not the same. Of course it would be easy to explain this by loose talk about feeling and sentiment, much as some critics would have us believe that Millet could neither draw nor paint, yet was a great artist all the same; but for those who believe that there is no result without means, that the important thing is not what the artist feels, but what he expresses, and that all expression must be by technical methods, so that there is no good art which is not technically good, such an explanation is no explanation. The feeling and the sentiment are there, and I shall have something to say about them presently: but they have not got upon the wall by miracle, but by the use of means to that end; and when we find Puvis magnificently successful where others fail, we begin to ask ourselves if it is not, perhaps, *because* of his

apparent shortcomings, rather than in spite of them, that he succeeds, and whether what seem like technical defects are not really, for his purpose, technical merits.

If this is the case, one would expect to find that the extreme simplicity of his later manner was acquired, and that he reached it by a series of eliminations; and one has only to go to the museum of Amiens to convince one's self of the truth of this surmise. "War" and "Peace," his first trials at grand decorative art, are in many ways singularly unlike the later Puvis. They show little or nothing of the stiffness, the lack of accent, the flatness and paleness of colour, that we associate with his name. They are the work of a good pupil of the schools, showing already something of decorative talent, but rather turbulent in composition, well drawn in an academic style, and painted with full modelling and with an almost overstrong light and shade. They are not the work of a master of realism, but they are realistic in method up to a certain point. There is in one of them the back of a female figure who is engaged in milking a goat, which is a very good bit of flesh-painting, white and plump, with redundant modelling and nearly black shadows. The bits are better painted, in their way, than anything he has done since, but the general effect is spotty and unquiet; the pictures *cut through*, as I have said of Laurens's, and you do not feel the flatness of the wall. The great law of decoration is that the ornament should set off

and embellish, but never disguise, the thing ornamented; and in mural painting this thing is the wall, and its essential qualities of flatness and extent should be accentuated, not concealed. Look now at the pictures painted two years later, "Work" and "Rest," and see how Puvis is learning this lesson. The drawing is even more able than in "War" and "Peace,"—look at the foreshortened arm of the wood-cutter or at the herculean figures of the blacksmiths in "Work," or at the man with the skin about his loins in "Rest,"—but the light and shade is much more subordinated, and inside their outlines the figures are nearly flat. The landscape, too, is kept in simpler and flatter masses, though with some beautiful detail. Individual figures are singularly lovely. The mother with her child in "Work" is one of these; and the half-nude stooping woman in "Rest," and the other one who is seated with her back turned to the spectator, are as classically beautiful as the work of Ingres, not to say of Raphael.

If you have once studied and understood these compositions, you will never believe that the apparent absence of form in Puvis's later work is other than intentional. Take one step more, and regard the vast composition called "Ave, Picardia Nutrix," and you will begin to see that the individual beauties of "Work" and "Rest" are too prominent, that you have noticed too much this back or the other arm, and that things charming in themselves may nevertheless

be prejudicial to the general effect—that it is possible for the decoration to be better while the details are less noticeably perfect. In this great composition Puvis reached, in a way, the perfection of decorative style. Nothing could be finer in large decorative effect and general balance, and no one part forces itself upon your attention, yet individual figures are exquisitely beautiful in their simplified and adequate drawing. The colour is quiet and less strong than in earlier work, but not without fulness and beauty. Opposite it stands the "Ludus pro Patria" of fifteen years later, and, looking from one to the other, one may be pardoned for wondering if the process of simplification and omission has not gone too far. The effect is as fine, perhaps, as in the "Ave, Picardia Nutrix,"—it could not well be finer,—but one misses the charm of detail and the refinement of form. Discarding our modern realism, Puvis had gone back as far as Raphael. Was it necessary to go further? Simplicity is good, but does it entail so much sacrifice? Perhaps not; for there is more than one way of attaining decorative effect, and Veronese and Raphael were great decorators as well as Giotto. But Puvis de Chavannes had to work out the expression of his own artistic personality as well as to form a decorative style. In 1865, at the age of forty, he certainly had not yet entirely expressed himself, even if his artistic character was then fully formed. He was slow of development, and had been a recognised and exhibit-

ing artist for only six years. He had done beautiful work, but his most characteristic work was yet to do.

The titles of two of his great paintings at Lyons give a hint of the elements of his artistic nature: "Vision Antique—Symbol de la Forme" and "Inspiration Chrétienne—Symbol du Sentiment," as the catalogue of the Salon of 1886 has it. A desire for Greek simplicity and grandeur, a desire for Gothic sentiment and directness of expression—these two desires have pushed him forward to new and ever new suppressions of the useless, the insignificant, the cumbrous. He has come to leave out not only every detail that may interfere with the effect of the whole, but every detail that is not absolutely necessary to the expression of the whole. He has eliminated now for the sake of perfect clarity and now for the sake of quaint simplicity. On the classic side his highest expression is perhaps in the "Sacred Wood." Could the sense of idyllic peace and noble tranquillity be more perfectly rendered? At first sight the drawing may seem simple and almost childish, and one may think it easy to do the like; but there is the knowledge of a lifetime in these grand lines, and they are simple only as a Greek statue is simple. There are antique figures that look almost wooden in their lack of detail and of fleshy modelling, and yet in which the more you know the more you shall find, until you are astonished at the learning which neglected nothing while omitting so much.

Giotto and Fra Angelico have also had their influ-

PUVIS DE CHAVANNES: "THE SACRED WOOD"

ence on Puvis, and he has felt, as have so many others, the wonderful effect of their rigidly simple works. Doubtless they were decorative by instinct, and simple because they knew no better, and left out facts which they had never learned to put in. Is that a reason why a modern painter may not learn their lesson, and knowingly sacrifice much that we have learned, and which they never knew, for the sake of attaining their clearness and directness of expression? The system is capable of abuse, as imitators of Puvis have shown us; and one must be very sincere and very earnest not to make it an empty parody. It is not enough to leave out the unessential; one must have something essential to say. Puvis, at his best, is absolutely grand and absolutely sincere; and while he sacrifices much, it is for the sake of expressing a lofty and pure sentiment in a chastened but all the more effective style.

But, besides the admirer of the Greeks and of the primitives, there is also in Puvis the man of the latter end of the nineteenth century, of the epoch of impressionism and the school of *plein air*. Nothing is more curious in the history of art than the way in which the continued study of chiaroscuro has brought modern painting back by a devious route to the shadelessness of the primitives. The early painters had no light and shade, as the Japanese have none. After all other possibilities of light and shade had been exhausted, the artists of the nineteenth century began to study the model out of doors in gray daylight, and

lo! the effect is almost that of the early frescoes, but with a difference. There is almost as little shade, but there is more study of values—that is, of the exact relative degree of light or dark of each object as compared with other objects and with the sky. In his use of this truth of value Puvis has added something new to the art of decorative painting, and in this and in his study of landscape he is singularly modern. His earlier backgrounds are entirely classic, but gradually landscape occupies a greater and greater place in his work. In the "Ludus pro Patria" the landscape is the really important thing, and the figures are more or less incidental; and this is even truer of other compositions, such as the great landscapes called "Summer" and "Winter," in the Paris hôtel-de-ville. In these the figures are relatively of little more importance than in many a painting by Corot, and they are real landscape pictures, as I have called them. Of course depth and mystery and the illusion of light are not sought by the painter, who is decorator first and landscapist afterward; the foregrounds are much conventionalised and detail is eliminated. Our painter remains the simplifier in landscape as in the figure; but the essentials of landscape are studied with wonderful thoroughness and for tone, value, colour, and large form, no modern landscape is better than that of Puvis de Chavannes. In the vast decoration at the head of the staircase in the museum of Rouen a composition otherwise not of his best is saved by the splen-

did background, in which the panorama of the city of Rouen and the islands of the Seine is painted with all the perfection of modern landscape art.

Of course the work of no man remains always at its highest level, and it is hard for any one to escape the defects of his qualities. After the long training in elimination, what wonder if the master sometimes seems oblivious of the things he has so striven to subordinate, and if there are passages in some of his latest work where drawing ceases to be simplified and becomes falsified? You will find now and again in his pictures an ankle or a wrist that is out of drawing, feeble, and boneless, or a body that is ill constructed and wrongly put together. He who has learned to forget has sometimes forgotten too much. And his manner of decoration, admirably suited to the buildings for which he most often worked, is less perfectly adapted to the rich surroundings of his paintings in Boston. One may imagine that, if he had seen the building he would have painted them differently, though perhaps he was too old to change his style. At any rate those noble compositions seem to me less satisfactory in their relation to the architecture about them than anything else he did.

A classicist of the classicists, a primitive of the primitives, a modern of the moderns, Puvis de Chavannes is, above all, an individual and original artist, and to copy his methods would be to learn ill the lesson he teaches. His style is indissolubly bound up with

his message; his manner is the only one fit to express what he alone has to say. It would be but an ill-fitting, second-hand garment for another. But we may learn from him that imitation is not art, that the whole is greater than the parts, and that art in service may be the freest art and the noblest. All fact and all research are grist to the mill of art, but they are not bread until ground and kneaded and baked. The day of mere fact and of mere research is nearly ended, and the isolated easel-picture is no longer the only form of art. We have come back to the old true notion that one of the finest things art can do is to make some useful thing beautiful, and the highest aim of many of our painters is to beautify the walls of the temples and palaces of the people, as the highest name they give themselves is that of "decorator."

WHISTLER

THE Whistler Memorial exhibition, which was held in Boston in February and March, 1904, was a unique occasion for the study of Whistler's art. It is not at all probable that so many of his works will ever again be got together in this country, or that so ample an opportunity will be offered for seeing him in almost every phase of his career and in almost every branch of his practice. The exhibition was, indeed, incomplete in one important particular, for it could not contain three or four pictures which are his most uncontested successes. The portrait of his mother is in the Luxembourg Gallery, that of Carlyle, belonging to the Corporation of Glasgow, had been lent to the exhibition of the Royal Scottish Academy then open in Edinburgh. The former is generally admitted to show a more perfect balance of the qualities personal to Whistler with the qualities common to good painters of all times than anything else he produced, and is therefore rightly, in a sense, considered his masterpiece. The "Carlyle" is of nearly the same time and of much the same character. Another picture which is thought by those who care especially for the Whistlerianism of Whistler to be finer than either of these, the "Miss

Alexander," was also in the exhibition at Edinburgh. These omissions, serious to be sure, were almost the only ones of importance. Of Whistler's beginnings and tentative efforts in this or that direction before he made sure of that which was to be his own; of his early and charming successes in the first works that defined clearly his artistic personality; of the later work, entirely personal, in which his peculiar qualities become more defined and all other qualities gradually cease to occupy him, there were abundant examples. There were works in oil, water-colour, pastel; there were drawings, lithographs, etchings, dry-points; works in every medium which he used, and subjects of every kind which he attempted; portraits, figure-subjects, marines, "nocturnes"; and works of every date from his schoolboy sketches to canvases left unfinished at his death. Even for the absent portraits there was the best substitute attainable in the "Rosa Corder," which is of about their date and nearly of their quality, ranking only just below the portrait of the artist's mother in the opinion of some connoisseurs, while "The Fur Jacket" marked the beginning of the transition to the later manner.

Such an exhibition naturally incites one to attempt some sort of estimate of Whistler's artistic production. It is too early for any definite decision as to its ultimate value or as to this artist's relative rank in the hierarchy of artists, ancient and modern; but one may at least try to define the nature of his art—to

show what it was and what it was not, wherein it failed or succeeded, what are the qualities which it did or did not possess. I the less regret my inability to speak with any authority as to Whistler's etchings, because in this field his superiority seems to be less contested. The variation of judgment seems to be between the opinion that he was the greatest etcher since Rembrandt and the opinion that he was the greatest etcher that ever lived. Mr. Pennell, who has strongly stated the latter view, begins by ruling all Rembrandt's more important plates out of the count as "pot-boilers," a term which he makes synonymous with compositions, and having thus eliminated, almost entirely, the intellectual and imaginative content of Rembrandt's work, bases his judgment, as far as one can gather, on technical considerations alone. One may accept expert testimony as to the great technical excellence of Whistler's practice as an etcher without feeling that this alone is sufficient to secure for him, permanently, the supreme position assigned him. The inexpert may feel that his art is, after all, of the same kind and quality in his etchings as in his paintings, and that his limitations are not, in themselves, reasons for praise, until it is proved that the world would be gainer by the absence from all art of the qualities he had not. With the general statement that Whistler's etchings are to-day considered by the best qualified judges as among the finest ever produced, I am willing to leave them, and to give my attention to his

work in colour as represented in this collection and in such examples as I have been able to see elsewhere.

One of the feelings most commonly expressed by visitors to Copley Hall was that of surprise at the variety of the work shown; and the pictures certainly do cover a considerable range of subject-matter. Yet the limitation of this range in certain directions seems to me quite as remarkable as its extent. I do not remember a single figure-picture by Whistler in which anybody is doing anything in particular. His figures stand or sit or recline, but they never act. And I do not remember a landscape with a tree in it, or a hill, or, except in one or two early works, so much as a rock. From the beginning he shows a tendency toward that elimination of definite subject and of definite representation which he justified theoretically in his "Ten O'Clock," and elsewhere—a tendency to extract from nature a few notes of colour, a few lines and shapes, and to give these with as little else as possible. This tendency affirms itself more and more until it assumes its extreme form in some of the later "nocturnes," where mist and darkness so disguise all forms that definite drawing becomes not only unnecessary, but impossible, or in some of those pastels in which there is but a hint of anything actual, a line or two and a touch or two of colour, suggested by and suggesting something in nature, but imitating nothing. The nineteenth century has been an epoch of shifting and uncertain standards, of confused

efforts, in which each of the arts has been reaching out for the effects proper to the others. Music has become more and more pictorial, and has attempted to convey definite ideas and even to represent external facts. For more than forty years Whistler was engaged in the effort to make painting resemble pure music as nearly as possible—to make it a matter of tones and harmonies and intervals of intrinsic beauty, acting directly upon the senses and the nerves independently of the intellect. His titles, which seem affected and are certainly inconvenient, being hard to remember and helping little in the identification of particular pictures, are yet perfectly logical. In practice we find ourselves neglecting them, and seizing on those sub-titles which answer our purpose better. But the musical titles he chose do show what his art constantly tended to become, even if they do not answer in all respects to what it was. It would seem that painting can go no farther in the direction of Whistler's later work without ceasing altogether to be the art we have known by that name.

It is of no special significance that Whistler began the serious study of art as a pupil of Gleyre; it is much more significant that the earliest of the paintings exhibited by the Copley Society shows him as an admirer of Courbet. This is a portrait of himself, the head only, in a large black felt hat, and has been frequently reproduced. It was painted about 1859, and the rather violent light and shade, with black

shadows, the yellowish tone of the flesh, and the attempt at powerful modelling, point unmistakably to the influence under which it was produced. Courbet's vigorous naturalism and rather coarse and boisterous strength is as unlike the spirit of Whistler as anything one can well conceive; but Courbet was the most prominent opponent of the old academic formulas at the precise moment when Whistler and Manet, Whistler's elder by one year, were beginning their careers, and they could but be attracted to him. Both impressionism and the radically different art which seems, just now, to be superseding it as an influence on the younger painters, owe their origin, in a manner, to Courbet. He proved that good painting could be done without regard to "the rules," and he set students to looking at nature for themselves; and we are therefore indebted to him for more than his own pictures. His direct influence on Whistler, however, was not very deep or lasting. Traces of it may perhaps be found, now and then, in the pictures painted within the next few years, but they soon disappear. Whistler may have been thinking of Courbet when he painted the Coast of Brittany in 1861—there may be a lingering reminiscence even in "The Blue Wave" of 1862. Later than that one can find no specific resemblance to Courbet in Whistler's work. For still a year or two he occasionally produces a piece of representation, more or less realistic in intention, like "The Thames," in 1863, but by this time he is finding

himself, and ceasing to attempt the things which it is not in him to do.

"The Coast of Brittany" and "The Thames" are not pictures which any one would be likely to care much about except for the after-work of the man who painted them. They are interesting because he did them, but they are not beautiful. It is different with three pictures painted in 1862, "The Blue Wave," "The Building of Westminster Bridge," and "The White Girl." Each of these remains a remarkable and beautiful work, not in all respects surpassed by anything the artist did afterwards. That which is most unlike the things which were to follow is the "Westminster Bridge," which, if it stood by itself, would seem the work of an artist of an entirely different type from that of Whistler. Its virtues are other than those which came specially to characterise him, while it is weakest in just those qualities in which he became strongest. It is not particularly fine in colour, being of a somewhat conventional brownish tone throughout; neither is it distinguished by charm of linear pattern, though its intricate linear structure is interesting. As straightforward painting of nature it is vigorous and skilful, showing much clearness of vision and power of representation. But it is its treatment of subject and its attitude toward humanity that mark it as something apart in the production of its author. Here, for once, there is something going on, and something very definite. The

figures are very small, and insignificant as figures; but the power of humanity over nature, the many and strange inventions of man, loom large in it. This is no "arrangement" or "harmony"; it is a picture with a subject imaginatively conceived and powerfully rendered—a picture by an artist partly realist, partly romanticist, who seems destined to carry on in new fields and in a personal way the work of the school of Barbizon. Never again did Whistler do anything resembling it or show any signs of the kind of energy that it witnesses to.

In "The Blue Wave" we have more of Whistler as we know him, but we have at the same time both more naturalism and more conventionalism than we shall see later. Essentially it is an arrangement in blue and brown, but the brown is richer and deeper, the blue more intense, than he will ever make them again; and there is more occupation with the precise notation of form than in his maturer work. He is beginning to experiment with colour, but he uses it in strong oppositions and with the aim of attaining fulness and force rather than refinement; while he hesitates to break too sharply with realism or with the traditional methods of painting. It is rich and handsome, a fine and most effective picture, but beside the marines he painted some years afterward it seems a trifle heavy and sombre.

In these two pictures we have two phases of an interesting and highly promising artist, whose future

course is not yet certain. In "The White Girl" Whistler definitely announces himself as the painter he is to become. Here there is no more subject than in any portrait, no strong oppositions, no great amount of realisation. The picture represents a girl in a white dress standing on a white skin before a white curtain, the only colour, apart from the tones of flesh and hair, being a bit of blue in the matting on the floor and the hues of a few flowers which she has let fall. There is little firmness of construction or solidity of modelling in the flesh, which is reduced almost to one flat tone, and there is no especial ease or brilliancy of handling. The painting has evidently cost trouble in parts, and the colour is a little lacking in perfect purity, the conventional brown not being yet entirely eliminated from the palette. The greatest charm of the work is in the sympathetic rendering of the face, not beautiful, but young and pure and sweet, and in the natural grace of the erect figure. It is somewhat timid and awkward work as yet, but in its reliance for artistic effect upon the decorative division of space, on grace of line, and on the delicate opposition of nicely discriminated tones, it is already very characteristic. The artist has found the road he was destined to tread, and henceforth steps aside from it but seldom.

In the years from 1861 to 1864, according to Mr. Freer, were painted a number of small sketches, owned by him, which show Whistler experimenting on the

lines suggested in the "White Girl," and preluding such delightful early successes as the "Little White Girl" and the "Symphony in White No. 3." They are sketches only, without heads or hands or definite form, not completed pictures in any sense; but as sketches they are delicious, and the chance to see them in relation to the work for which they were a preparation is one of the things for which we are most grateful to the Boston exhibition. When one remembers how lately Whistler himself had been under the influence of Courbet—remembers, also, that Manet was in the midst of his black manner, and that the later impressionism was not yet heard of—one realises the great originality of their delicate, pure colour and high key of light. In composition they remind one of Japanese prints, but there is something Greek about the figures, as if Tanagra figurines could be flattened and painted upon a screen. Not only much of the later art of Whistler is here in germ, but all the art of Albert Moore.

In the ten or twelve years following Whistler produced almost all of the works which have ever achieved anything like popular success. In 1864 he painted the "Princesse du Pays de la Porcelaine"; in 1865 or 1866 the "Little White Girl," and about the same time "The Music Room"; in 1867 the "Symphony in White, No. 3," which seems to be the last picture he signed with his name, and also the first which he signed with the butterfly which here appears in the first of

its many forms. To the late sixties or early seventies belong the earliest of the "nocturnes" and of the later marines. The portrait of his mother and the "Carlyle" must have been done before 1874, and probably, also, the "Miss Alexander" and the "Rosa Corder," while the date of "The Balcony" is, conjecturally, about 1876. I know of no instance of a dated picture after 1867, and it is very difficult to make certain of one's chronology. It is to be hoped that some one will take the trouble to search all available records and gather all scattered information, and will give us, as nearly as possible, a chronological list of Whistler's works. In the meantime it may be safely stated that the period from his thirtieth to his fortieth year was that in which he produced those pictures which, if they do not necessarily show his special qualities at their highest and finest, show them in the best balanced combination with others which have generally been considered desirable in art. It is the period in which his work, if not in all ways most characteristic, is most complete as we generally understand completeness.

Whether or not the work of this decade is considered Whistler's best will always be largely a matter of the personal equation of the critic. It is also, in a sense, a matter of small importance. The career is ended, the work is all done. The painter's reputation will stand upon what is best of him, whether it came early or late. If the work be fine and great, the man was

a great artist, and whether he was greatest at forty or at sixty is, indeed, a matter of some interest, but one that does not and cannot affect his essential greatness.

"The Little White Girl" was, perhaps, the general favourite with visitors to Copley Hall, pleasing more people than any of the other pictures there shown. It owes this distinction partly to its very great merit, partly to what its author would, a little later, have thought to be extrinsic and eliminable qualities. Its appeal lies partly in the painting, partly in the things painted. It has no very definite subject—it is essentially an arrangement of exquisite tones in a delightful pattern—but the objects represented have more than their relative value as elements of the pattern; they are things capable, in themselves, of arousing interest and of giving pleasure. In the first place, there is physical beauty. Whistler is thought to have painted it under the temporary influence of Rossetti, and certainly he never again produced anything which shows the same feeling for the beauty of womanhood. Character and expression continued to occupy him more than he would admit, but pure beauty of form and feature he never again represented with the same interest. The figure leans against a marble mantel, her head, in profile, pensively inclined, one arm stretched along the shelf, the other falling by her side, the hand holding a Japanese fan. Behind her is a mirror, and the reflection of her face therein is

not beautiful, but her profile is, and the lines of her throat and of her graceful left hand are admirable. The dress is of some filmy substance, and its white, with that of the marble, contrasting with the black of the grate and the mysterious grays of the reflections in the mirror, are the main elements of the harmony; but there are frank reds and pure and vivacious blues in the fan and in the Oriental vases, delicate tints of rose in the flowering azalea which fills the lower right-hand corner. These notes enliven the scheme, while the objects that make them are, as I have said, interesting things apart from the *rôle* they play. The azalea, particularly, charmingly drawn and painted, is altogether delightful. The painting is flat, almost without shadows, a little dryer and sharper-edged than later work, a matter of justly discriminated values and simple silhouettes; but there is substance in the figure, subtly expressed, everywhere but in the right hand, which is rather thin and papery. The art of choice and arrangement is greater than the ability of rendering, but the latter is not so noticeably deficient as to interfere greatly with one's enjoyment. The total effect is of extreme refinement and exquisite loveliness.

In "The Music Room" we have again a mirror in an important *rôle*. There are two figures in the room, a woman in a black riding habit who seems to be holding up something, the nature and position of which one does not quite understand, and a little girl in

white buried in a book. In the mirror is the reflection of a third figure, whose place in the real room is also rather enigmatical,—that of an elderly lady apparently playing on the piano. The girl is a charming figure, not quite realised, but very adequately suggested. The riding habit is perfectly flat, but its rich black is pleasant to look at. The head and hands of its wearer remind one of Corot's flesh-painting—rather vague in form, a fine gray-pink in colour, absolutely just in value. The great beauty of the picture, however, is in the wonderful painting of the accessories, the curtains and vases, and their reflections in the glass. One ceases to care what the figures are doing, or almost whether they are figures or not, as one studies the delicate colour, the perfect tone, the fascinating lightness and fluidity of touch with which these things are rendered. In spite of Whistler's query, his admirers are ever prone to "drag in Velasquez." Here, at least, is a bit of painting that the great Spaniard might have been proud to own.

Was it because he felt that in such a picture as this the still-life was, in a manner, better than the figures, that Whistler never makes so much of it again? For complete representation of objects this picture is perhaps his high-water mark. And in only one important picture of later date that I can remember, "The Balcony,"—a picture more purely Japanese than any other, in which representation has almost ceased to

exist—does he put two or more figures on one canvas. Except as mere spots or suggestion of crowds his figures hereafter exist alone. He confines himself to the portrait-painter's problem of the single figure or even the single head. In the "Miss Alexander" there are still a few accessories—a panelled wall, a garment thrown over a stool, a few daisies at the side; in the "Mother" there are only a straight curtain and a framed print, and in the "Carlyle" even the curtain is gone. In the "Rosa Corder" there is not even a wall, the black figure emerging from blacker space, and this is the commoner condition in his later portraits, though a gray wall or a curtain filling the whole background is now and then suggested. In the use of anything like positive colour, also, Whistler becomes more sparing during this period. The "Mother" and the "Carlyle" are arrangements in black and gray, the "Rosa Corder" is an arrangement in black and brown. He even loses his interest in white, and the "Miss Alexander" seems to be the last picture in which white plays an important part. In "The Balcony" there is a bouquet of bright colours, but it is the last. The earliest nocturnes have still a powerful blue, though far less positive and intense than in earlier work, but it becomes less and less decided, fainter and grayer, or shifting into black. The variations of gray become his dominating preoccupation, and he distinguishes them with extraordinary subtlety.

The purely artistic elements of such a picture as the "Mother" are few and simple. A gray, a black, a little low-toned white, and the dim pink of the flesh, this is all of colour. The right lines of the curtain and the baseboard, cutting the parallelogram of the canvas, are echoed by the smaller rectangle of the frame upon the walls, and diagonally across this background is drawn the austere silhouette of the figure, its boundaries simplified into long curves, delicately modulated, but with scarce a break or accident in all their length. Everything is sober and severe except for the one outbreak of capricious fancy in the dainty embroidery of the curtain, which lights up the picture like a smile on a grave face. It is the masterly management of these elements—the perfect balance of the spaces so frankly outlined, the quality of the few tones of black or gray, the fine gradation of the curves—which gives the picture its rare distinction. These purely artistic matters were, perhaps, all that Whistler was consciously occupied with—this beautiful arrangement of tones and lines and spaces was all he would admit he had produced—but the picture owes its popularity to quite other qualities. The public has insisted on "caring about the identity of the portrait," or at least about its character and humanity, and in feeling that such a "foreign" emotion as love has, somehow, got itself expressed on the canvas. The gentle refinement of the aged face, the placid pose, with hands folded in the lap, the

WHISTLER: "THE MOTHER"

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sweetness and strength of character, the aroma of gentility, the peace of declining years—all these things have been rendered or suggested by the artist with reverent care and sympathy. One feels that he has so painted *his* mother that she becomes a type of *the* mother as she is for all of us, or as we should wish her to be, and we accuse him, in spite of his denial, of having made something finer and nobler and far more important than any "arrangement in gray and black," however exquisite.

In the "Rosa Corder" the scheme is black on black, a bit of gray in the gloved hand, and a single note of brown in the low riding-hat and feather. It is a canvas of the narrow, upright form which becomes henceforth so characteristic of Whistler's portraits, and the lines are more sinuous and graceful than severe, though with no slightest tendency to floridity. They are admirably expressive of the firm elasticity of youth and strength, and of the easy poise of a body in its prime. The head, turned over the shoulder, is again in profile, and in its low tone and lack of modelling seems, at first, somewhat sacrificed, but as one looks at it it grows more elegant and distinguished. Here also we have something more than mere arrangement—a sympathetic presentment of a human personality.

It is in such pictures as these that the comparison to Velasquez, so frequently made, is, if anywhere, justified. If any Western artist exercised anything

like a permanent influence on Whistler it was the great Spaniard, but it seems to me more just to say that Whistler's talent resembled one side of that of Velasquez than that there was anything like imitation. Some of the things which Velasquez had done it was natural for Whistler to do, as it was natural for him to attain some of the qualities of Japanese art, and in the arrangement and division of space, the elegance of silhouette, the beauty of quiet tone, the richness of his blacks and grays, the younger painter is nearly or quite the equal of the elder. The comparison, then, is natural, but it is rather overwhelming. Putting aside the mere abundance of Velasquez; putting aside his ability as an organiser of great spectacles like "The Lances" or his mastery of large compositions like the "Maids of Honour" or the "Spinners"; neglecting his horses and his dogs and everything but such single portraits as in their simplicity of scheme may be fitly compared with those of Whistler; and we have only to remember that another painter of our day, and a very different one, is also constantly compared to him to see how much of Velasquez is outside Whistler's range. If to all the qualities of Whistler's best portraits could be added all Sargent's sure notation of form and brilliancy of execution, we should have, not yet Velasquez, but something liker to him than anything done in two centuries past. How far the balance may be redressed by those things in Whistler's work

which are not to be found in that of Velasquez, or of any one else, we may not yet say; but in the portrait of his mother Whistler is one of the most refined and delightful artists of the nineteenth century; Velasquez is one of the greatest painters of all time.

How far the absence from these portraits of Whistler's of substance, form, construction, modelling, is consequent on inability, how far on deliberate choice, is a question that perhaps admits of no definite answer. After all, if desire is not necessarily ability, a lack of desire is disability. One may not be able to do what one likes, but one cannot, in art, do what one does not like; and to say that an artist does not care for certain qualities is the same thing as to say he cannot attain them. It may be true that he could do this or that if he chose, but he cannot choose. He lacks the first essential ability, the ability to desire. Either from a lessening of physical vitality or a greater concentration on the purely musical elements of his art, then, Whistler did not choose—could not choose—to give us, after the early seventies, anything so complete as these three of four portraits; anything with their human interest, their quality of characterisation, their degree of realisation. "The Fur Jacket" is already slighter and looser, and after that his later portraits become more and more the "arrangements" he called them. The pigment grows ever thinner and more fluid, the edges disappear after

the modelling, the figures grow ghostlike and unsubstantial, the hands cease to exist, and the heads become only a note of flesh-colour in the general harmony. Perhaps the weakest of them all is the "Comte de Montesquiou-Fezensac," which is not even an agreeable arrangement either in line or colour; one of the best is also a very late one, "L'Andalousienne," graceful in line, delicate in its differentiation of closely related grays, but with a face almost devoid of features.

It is not in his later portraits, which show no new invention of harmony to balance their loss of humanity, that the best work of the last thirty years of Whistler's life is to be found, but in that series of small canvases, "harmonies," "notes," "arrangements," "nocturnes," which are among the most characteristic, if not in all respects the finest, of his productions. They rarely exceed a foot or two in dimensions, and many of them are only a few inches square. They are occasionally small single figures, more often merely heads—or they are bits of streets and shop fronts, river scenes, marines. Whistler was a city-dweller who took occasional trips to the sea-shore, and there is no sign of love for the country in any work of his; indeed, one can hardly say that there is any love for the sea, as such, in these later works—one can hardly imagine a yachtsman caring for Whistler's sea-pieces because they represent his favourite element. He treats the sea, as he does

everything else, as a pretext for a harmony of two or three subtly discriminated tones, and it lends itself admirably to his purpose because of the lack of solid objects or of definite and generally recognisable forms. Definition and realisation have become irksome and distasteful to him, and, whatever his subject, he gives as little of them as possible. Many of these things are true sketches, nearly instantaneous in execution, painted, almost, in an hour or two. Others have been long retained and worked over again and again, but never with the preoccupation of "finish." The labour has gone to the gradual refinement of the tones, the achievement of more perfect harmony, and the work is left, at the end, as vague and floating in its forms as at the beginning. It is even possible that the vagueness has increased with the progress of the work, and that the least definite statements are those which have been most pondered. The painter has come almost as nearly as is conceivable to a realisation of his personal ideal—the ideal of painting purged of its representative elements, and brought to the condition of what is called "absolute music"—painting in which colour, pattern, line, exist for themselves, with the least possible reference to anything external. But if we are refused so much that has hitherto pleased or interested us in painting, what we get we get with a singular intensity. Clear your mind of prepossessions, forget about meanings and intentions, forget about nature, forget about form

or substance or definition—let the artist play to you, and you shall find his airs ravishing in their sweetness.

And they are airs which no one else has played. For this art differs from all the art of the past not only in that everything but the purely musical elements has been banished from it, but in that these elements are treated differently and are of a different kind and quality. It is not only that colour and pattern and the material beauty of paint are to stand alone, but that we are given a different colour, a different pattern, a different material beauty from any we have known. In all these things the characteristic note of Whistler is extreme refinement and tenuity. To his extraordinary sensitiveness and delicacy of perception any fulness of sound is almost as distressing as noisiness, and splendour is perilously akin to vulgarity. In colour he gives us no crashing climaxes, no vibrant, full-orchestraed harmonies—his is an art of nuances and shadings, of distinctions scarce to be followed by the ordinary eye. What he calls blue or green or rose, violet or grenat or gold, are the disembodied spirits of these colours, tinges and intimations of them rather than the colours themselves. Sometimes the tinge is so faint that no one else can perceive it, and sometimes what, to his consciousness, is the keynote of his composition, is so faintly sounded that, to another, it seems the least important note of all. Finally he wraps everything

in the gray mystery of night, and his picture seems composed of nothing more substantial than the atmosphere itself.

So his lines are reduced to the fewest, and modulated with the most imperceptible fineness, and his actual use of material has been similarly sublimated. Not only could he not abide the rough hatchings of the Impressionists or the heavy masses of paint of the modern Dutch or the followers of Dupré, but the rich textures of the Venetians, the close enamel of Holbein or Van Eyck, the crisp touches of Hals, are equally foreign to him. He has a strong sense for the beauty of material, but it is of material brought to the verge of immateriality. His paint is fluid, thin, dilute; his touch feather-light and melting. There may be twenty successive layers of pigment on the canvas, but it is scarce covered, and its texture shows everywhere. It is almost as if he painted with thought.

One feels thick-fingered and clumsy in trying to distinguish among these later works of Whistler—works in which a kind of art by suggestion has gone so far that one catches one's self wondering whether one has not been hypnotised into a belief in pictures which have no objective existence. It is to rub the bloom off them to examine them too closely. There were many of them in Copley Hall, and by no means all of the same quality, but they all seemed too slight to bear handling, too lacking in the positive for

description, too evanescent, almost, for separate recollection. They blend in one's memory like past twilights, and have, in the retrospect, little more individuality than last year's violets. Is it worth while to catalogue and annotate, to say that this is beautiful and that not so beautiful, this successful and that a failure? I have my notes, and even without them I recall a few things with some distinctness —"*Grenat et Or—Le Petit Cardinal*," one of several variations in dim reds; "Symphony in Violet and Blue," a marine in which the violet is little more than gray, and the blue is but a faint blue-green; "Blue and Silver—Trouville," dainty and clear; and "Nocturne in Blue and Silver—Cremorne Lights," lovely in its pale opalescence. Then, "Nocturne in Black and Gold—The Falling Rocket," with its sprinkle of gold-dust on the blue-black darkness; and, most ghost-like of all, two nocturnes, "Gray and Silver—Chelsea Embankment," and "Blue and Silver—Battersea Reach," so much alike and so devoid of nameable colour that one fails to see how one has more blue or less gray than the other, but quite wonderful in their feeling of mystery and of palpable air. So one recalls other things, not so perfect, where the harmony has been missed, be it ever so slightly, and there is nothing to take its place. But it is not this or that picture that one remembers most clearly, it is the total impression of an art infinitely subtle, infinitely fastidious, tremulously intense; an art of

exquisite sensibilities and fine nerves, of reticences and reservations; a music of muted strings.

Slight as are Whistler's later oils, his water-colours and pastels are yet slighter. Pastel is the slightest and most evanescent seeming of materials; but surely no one has used it with such slightness as he. A few square inches of brown or gray paper, a few chalk lines, lightly set down, a touch of colour here and there—this makes up a pastel as Whistler conceived it. The subject is most often the figure, nude or slightly draped, but these are figures from which all the things on which the great figure-painters spent their efforts have been eliminated. Here are no attempts to express structure or stress or pressure, still less to render solidity or the texture of flesh or even its colour. The lines are of beautiful quality in themselves, but their charm is that of their own curvature as abstract lines and of their arrangement, their relative distance from each other, and the way in which they subdivide the space of paper. The touches of colour are delightfully placed, but they represent nothing, though nature may have given the hint for their placing and the relative intensity of their hue. Light and shade, for which Whistler has never greatly cared, is eliminated entirely, and even truth of values, which he has retained longest of the qualities common to great painting, is now abandoned. Pretty much everything of our Western art has been left out as non-essential, and even that com-

position of light and dark, upon which the artists of the far East have always laid so much stress, has disappeared. With infinitely greater deftness and mastery, and now of set intention, as the ultimate expression of his ideal in art, Whistler has come back to the condition of those early sketches, already mentioned, which were the prelude to "The Little White Girl" and "The Balcony." His material aiding him, he has sloughed off, more completely even than in his latest nocturnes, everything that can be sloughed and leave a vestige of painting as an art of representation. To this he was bound to come at last, if he lived long enough. It is impossible to imagine any further step that shall not lead to the tracing of purely meaningless lines and spots for the pleasant diversification of a surface. The Whistler who is most like the great artists of all times, as our Western world has known them, is the Whistler of the "Mother." The Whistler who is most entirely himself, pushing his own theories to their possible limit and relying exclusively upon his own special gifts, is the Whistler of the nocturnes and the pastels—a dainty, winged spirit, as light and as graceful as the butterfly he chose for his emblem.

Two or three interesting beginnings in directions which were to lead to nothing, a few captivating early pictures, perhaps half a dozen fine portraits, a hundred or two little pictures and pastels of ethereal charm—such is the baggage, slender enough it must be con-

fessed, and, perhaps, a trifle fragile, with which the painter begins his voyage down the ages. One can imagine some of the abounding geniuses of the past, henceforth his fellow-travellers, looking at him with raised eyebrows. "Was, then, your time so impoverished that this seemed wealth to it?" It is indeed probable that in no other century could so great a reputation have been founded on work of this texture, but there are certain considerations which lead to a reasonable expectation of permanency for it. For it is not the men who do many things well, and achieve a high average of merit, whom the world most delights to honour, but the men who do one thing better than anybody else. Whistler has done certain things that no one else has done, given us certain sensations not to be had from other works than his. No one else has so well painted night, no one else so suggested mystery, no one so created an atmosphere. In no other art we know has the pleasure to be derived from tone and from the division of space been given so purely and so intensely. Even should these things be done again, and done better, he will have been the first to do them, and that of itself is a title to fame. And apart from the value of his own achievement, Whistler has been, and is, a potent influence on others, and such influences have their own special glory. He has had, and will have for a time, mere imitators who copy his methods and vainly hope to become great artists by mixing black with all their colours, but there are thousands

of others whose perceptions have been quickened by contact with his, who have learned to see more delicately because he has shown them how, whose eyes have been opened to beauties before unnoticed.

Was he a great master? Posterity will decide. At any rate, he was a true artist, and in an age too much dominated by the scientific spirit—an age given up to experiment and the desire to know and to record—he consistently devoted his beautiful talent to those things in art which are farthest removed from naturalism and from science, and in his impatience of a painting that is not always art created an art which almost ceases to be painting.

SARGENT

SINCE the death of Whistler, Mr. Sargent holds, by all odds, the highest and most conspicuous position before the world of any artist whom we can claim as in some sort an American—indeed, he is to-day one of the most famous artists of any country, easily the first painter of England, and one of the first wherever he may find himself. Not only is he indubitably one of the most brilliant of living artists, but his enthusiastic admirers are ready to proclaim him one of the great artists of all times, and to invite comparison of his works with those of the greatest of his predecessors. He has painted a vast number of portraits, a few pictures, and some mural decorations which, from the ability displayed in them and the originality of their conception, are certainly to be reckoned among the most considerable efforts in that branch of art produced within a century past.

Recently there was issued a volume of photogravure plates of his most important works, exclusive of his mural paintings, and this volume affords an admirable opportunity for a general view of his work as a painter—not as a decorator. His mural paintings would, in any case, require separate and exhaustive treatment, not only because they are

apart from the rest of his work, but because the demands of this kind of art are altogether different from those made upon the artist by portraiture and genre painting (and Sargent's largest pictures, other than the paintings in the Boston Public Library, are still essentially genre pictures), and the whole point of view of the critic must be shifted to deal with the new considerations involved.

It must be understood, then, at the outset, that nothing now said has any reference to these decorations. If, in the discussion of Sargent's other work, it is necessary to point out those things in which he is least great, it is because he is so large a figure in modern art that the attempt to define his limitations can only serve to accent his magnitude. To show where he is strongest it is necessary to show where he is less strong; and if any comparisons are implied, they are only with the highest. One begins by accepting him as head and shoulders above most of his contemporaries; the effort is to show wherein he resembles or differs from the great masters of other times, and to arrive at an approximate idea of the place which he may eventually hold among them. It is with this desire that one turns over the pages containing the record of a career already so astonishing, though we may reasonably hope that it is not more than half run.

In the first place, it becomes immediately evident that Sargent, as becomes a portrait painter, belongs to the class of observers rather than to that of the

composers. With some exceptions, he seems at his best almost in proportion to the limitation of his subject-matter; his single heads and figures being more thoroughly satisfactory than his groups of several figures. The exceptions are extremely significant, and do, in this case, really go far to prove the rule, for they are pictures of things seen, not of things arranged. They are such pictures as "El Jaleo" or the smaller "Spanish Dance"; as "Carnation, Lily, Lily, Rose" or the portrait of "The Children of E. D. Boit"—things which we should call admirably and ingeniously arranged were it not for the feeling that they happened so; that the artist seized upon a fortuitous natural composition and recorded it, either from memory or directly from the thing. Of course, one does not mean that it required no sense of composition to do this, or that the natural arrangement was unmodified by the artistic sense—only that the immediate inspiration of nature was necessary to stimulate the artist's sense of composition to this point, and that he is less happy when he is called upon to conceive beforehand an arrangement into which his observations of nature shall be made to fit—when he is asked to invent a natural grouping of several figures which shall afterwards be studied from the life. Instances of this relative inferiority to his own best are such groups as "Lady Elcho, Mrs. Tennant, and Mrs. Adeane" and "The Ladies Alexandra, Mary, and Theo Acheson," which, with all their brilliancy,

and in spite of their great beauty in the several parts, are not altogether as satisfactory as either Mr. Sargent's single portraits or his pictures. The latter group, with its reminiscence of Reynolds or Gainsborough, is also, like the portrait of "Miss Daisy Leiter" and one or two other things in which he has experimented in the vein of eighteenth-century art, a reminder that, like other observers, he is best when most frankly of his own time. They are extremely clever, as they could not well help being, being his, but they are not the real thing; and one feels that one has lost more in losing something of his acute observation of the actual than one has gained by the addition of what are, after all, transplanted graces. It is the unexpected that we expect from Mr. Sargent—his personal interpretation of what is; not the attempt to square it with other men's interpretration of what was.

Sargent, then, is to be ranked with the observers and painters—with the realists, in a sense, for there is a realism of elegance as well as of ugliness—and his task is to show us what he sees with his bodily eyes, not what he can imagine of beautiful or august. The art of the pure painters, of whom he is one, is a mingling of observation and craftsmanship, and their relative importance is determined partly by the rarity of their observations and the kind of facts observed by them, partly by the beauty which they know how to get out of the actual materials of their art and their handling of them. That Sargent is a past master of his craft

it is no longer necessary to say, and the eulogy of his workmanship is already made. In her introduction to the Scribner volume Mrs. Meynell quotes a passage from a letter of Ruskin's to Rossetti in which he says: "There are two methods of laying oil colour which can be proved right; . . . one of them having no display of hand, the other involving it essentially and as an element of its beauty." She rather objects to the word "display," thinking that, if writing for publication, Ruskin would have changed it for one of more dignity; but the word seems the right one. With the painters whom Fromentin calls *cachottier*, Sargent has no affinity, whether they paint simply and beautifully, with a handling that escapes detection in its very simplicity, or whether they indulge in mysterious processes savouring at once of cookery and of alchemy. There are no tricks in his trade—he is perfectly frank, and everything is on the surface, for him who runs to read. It does not satisfy him that his work is right, or even that it is actually easy for him to make it so—it must *look* easy. He is one of the great virtuosi of the brush, and he counts upon the pleasure his virtuosity will afford you for a great part of his effect. He will spare no pains to give you the impression that he has had to take none, and will repaint any part of his picture that may have cost too much effort, giving more labour that it may seem to have needed less. In this particular and perfectly legitimate charm of art—the charm of prompt and efficient execution, the

magic of the hand—Sargent is, perhaps, the equal of any one, even of the greatest. It remains to examine what are the characteristics of the vision which he fixes for us, what are the qualities of nature best observed by the eye and brain so admirably served.

Of the three great classes of truths which it is the business of the painter to observe, truths of colour, of light and shade and tone, and of form, it is the truths of form that Sargent observes most surely, and it is as a draughtsman that he most entirely triumphs. He is above all a painter of the shapes of things. This is partly a matter of temperament and gift, partly a matter of training and technical method. There is nothing in which the great colourists have more delighted than in the painting of human flesh, and the technical methods which Sargent originally acquired from his master, Carolus Duran, are, in spite of modification in his hands, ill fitted to express the peculiar irradiation and colouring from beneath which are the great charm of that substance. The sweeps of opaque colour laid on with a full brush are apt to give a texture as of drapery, no matter how accurate the particular tints may be; and if we are to have the pleasure of instantaneous execution, we must generally accept with it some diminution of the pleasure derivable from beautiful flesh painting. The great painters of flesh have generally been more *cachottier;* and, indeed, it may be said that the highest beauty of colouring is always more or less incompatible with too

great frankness of procedure, and demands a certain reticence and mystery. Whether the great technicians have felt this incompatibility and contented themselves with only a relative perfection of colour, or whether a less acute sensitiveness to colour was a condition precedent to their becoming great technicians, it is certain that the highest refinement of colour has not hitherto been found in conjunction with the most direct handling, and that, even with Velasquez, as his colour becomes more beautiful his handling will generally be found more mysterious. Something of the same sort is true, to a lesser degree, with light and shade; and the masters of chiaroscuro, the delicate discriminators of values, the creators of tone, have generally been mysterious technicians. Indeed, it may be said that light and shade is mystery, and has been the favourite means of expression of the painters to whom mystery makes the greatest appeal. No one would think of denying to Sargent a good natural eye for colour, or that sound training in values which is the basis of so much that is best in modern painting; but these are not the elements of art in which he is strongest or those which his methods are best fitted to express.

Of all those qualities of things with which the art of painting deals, form is the most concrete, the least mysterious and illusory, the least a semblance and the most a reality; and it is form, therefore, which is the most readily expressible by the direct and simple methods of the great executants. The master crafts-

men—the *painters* in the more limited sense—have always been great draughtsmen. There is a confusion, here, of long standing. We have been so accustomed to consider drawing a matter of line that we have confined the term draughtsman to the linealists, and have set them over against the painters as a separate and opposing class. The true division is between the draughtsmen by line and the draughtsmen by mass; and the art of painting as Hals practised it, and as Sargent practises it, is the representation of objects in their bulk rather than by their edges (by the analysis of their projecting or retreating planes) and the rendering of the forms thus distinguished in a direct and forcible manner, each touch of the brush answering in shape and size, and, as far as possible, in colour and value, to one of these natural planes.

Sargent was an admirable linear draughtsman before he was a painter, and is now an exquisite linear draughtsman when he cares to be so. He is a draughtsman of the nude figure as well as of the head, as his "Egyptian Girl" should remind us if it were necessary. It is his profound knowledge of form that renders his virtuosity possible, as his virtuosity is the instantaneous expression of his vivid sense of form; and any attempt to imitate his manner without his matter is an invitation to disaster—an invitation which his great prestige leads too many to extend. If by drawing we mean the power of clearly seeing and accurately rendering the actual forms of things—

leaving aside all questions of idealisation or expression by abstract line—Sargent is probably the greatest of living draughtsmen, and that is why he is a great painter.

It is this power of accurate drawing, in its variety of manifestations from Van Eyck to Frans Hals, that has always marked the great portrait painters as distinguished from the imaginative painters; but there is another power that has often enough been credited to them—that of insight. They have been thought to see below the surface, to form a definite conception of the character of their sitters, and to transfer that conception in some way to their canvas and to make us see it. To none of them has this power been more often credited than to Sargent, and stories are told of how this or that trait has been brought out in some picture of his which, though latent in the sitter, was unknown to the sitter's friends. On the strength of such stories, and of the impression of lifelikeness which his portraits make, he has even been called a psychologist. Is he so, or was any artist ever so? One may certainly argue that it is the business of the painter to see what is and record it, not to form theories of why it is—to have an eye for character, if you like, not an opinion of character. He may have an instinct for what is most characteristic in a face, and accent those things in it which are essentially individual, without necessarily having any clear conception of the individuality itself. As to Mr. Sargent, there is a story

which may be neither more nor less true than the others to which I have referred. He had painted a portrait in which he was thought to have brought out the inner nature of his sitter, and to have "seen through the veil" of the external man. When asked about it, he is said to have expressed some annoyance at the idea, and to have remarked: "If there were a veil, I should paint the veil; I can paint only what I see." Whether he said it or not, I am inclined to think that this sentence expresses the truth. Sargent, like other artists, paints his impression and he paints it more frankly and directly than many, with less brooding and less search for subtleties—paints it strongly and without reservation; and he leaves the psychology to those who shall look at the picture. His affair is with shapes and external aspects, not with the meaning of them; and because he has an extraordinary organisation for seeing these aspects truly and rendering them powerfully, with that slight touch of exaggeration which makes them more vivid to us than nature, and with those eliminations of the non-essential which are the necessity of art, we who look on can read more from the painted face than from the real one, and credit him with having written all that we have read.

One need not deny that there have been artists who have done something more or something other than this—men of a different type from Sargent, more attentive, more submissive, fuller of a tremulous sympathy, more ready to sink their own personality in

that of the sitter—who have given a more intimate life to their portraits than does he. Sargent is always himself,—John Sargent, painter,—quite cool and in the full possession of his powers, with the most wonderful eye and hand for receiving and recording impressions of the look of things that are now to be found in the world. The masters with whom it is inevitable that he should be compared are Hals and Velasquez; and if it must be left to posterity to say how nearly he has equalled them, we can be sure, even now, that his work is more like theirs than any other that has been produced in the past century.

THE EARLY WORK OF SAINT-GAUDENS

AS the first step in the modern resuscitation of sculpture was the abandonment of the stilted imitation of third-rate Roman antiques, and the study of the works of the Italian Renaissance, it was a happy coincidence that Augustus Saint-Gaudens should have had much such an apprenticeship as a Florentine sculptor of the fifteenth century might have had. His father was of southern France, his mother was Irish, and it may not be fanciful to see in the work of their son the Latin sense of form combined with the poetic feeling of the Celt. He himself is a New Yorker, well-nigh from birth, having been brought to this city from Dublin, his birth-place, while yet an infant. He was early apprenticed to a New York cameo-cutter and faithfully served his time, and even during the period of his study in Paris he devoted half his working hours to bread-winning in the exercise of his trade. He attributes much of his success to the habit of faithful labour acquired at this time, and speaks of his apprenticeship as "one of the most fortunate things that ever happened to him." Perhaps one may attribute to it, also, part of that mastery of low-relief which is such a noticeable element in his artistic equipment. In 1868 he went to

Paris to begin the serious study of his art, and after working for some time in the Petite École entered the studio of Jouffroy in the École des Beaux Arts.

Many of the most brilliant sculptors of our day were educated in the studio of Jouffroy; Falguière and Saint-Marceau had left it shortly before Saint-Gaudens entered it; Mercié was his fellow student there and the young American thus became a part of the fresh and vigorous movement of contemporary sclupture. He afterwards went to Rome, and finally, returning to this country, was given, in a happy hour, the commission for the Farragut statue in Madison Square. From the time when that statue was exhibited, in the plaster, at the Salon of 1880, his talent was recognised and his position assured.

Sculpture, in its primary conception, is the most positive and the most simple of all the arts. Painting deals with the visual aspects of things, with light and colour, and with the *appearance* of form. Sculpture deals only with actual form. A statue does not give the visual image of the form of a man; it gives the form itself. It follows from this that sculpture is, in a sense, an easier art than painting. One often sees a mere tyro, who would be altogether lost among the complications and conflicting difficulties of painting, produce, by measurement and the use of the calipers, a bust which has a certain approximate truth to the forms of nature. But in this simplicity of the art lies also its real difficulty; for the multifold aims

and difficulties of painting are also multifold resources for the artist, and a success in any one direction makes a successful work of art; but the sculptor, who has only one difficulty to contend with, has also only one means with which to succeed. If he fails in form he fails in everything. And form being the most tangible—the most accurately measureable—of all qualities of things that art has to do with, and the least mysterious and elusive, sculpture is of the arts the one most likely to fall into flat commonplace and the most difficult to keep up in the region of art and out of the region of imitation. Nothing is more tiresome than any sculpture but the best. A painter may be far from possessing the highest genius, yet find in some part of his many-sided art an escape from the commonplace and the real; but a mediocre sculptor is lost. The sculptor must be a genius or a nobody.

Here, then, has been the great problem of the sculptors of all ages, and they have met it in various ways. The noble abstraction of Pheidias degenerated, in the later Greek and Roman work, into a dead conventionality, and, the works of Pheidias being unknown to them, the artists of the Italian Renaissance struck out a new road for themselves and found the means, by a vague elusiveness of modelling, to express all their new and peculiarly modern interest in individuality of character and the personality of their models, without ever falling into the dry literalness of the plaster cast. In the earlier part of the last century dead-alive con-

ventionalism was again regnant, and when the sculptors of yesterday, following the lead of the painters who had already begun the movement, turned again to the independent study of nature, they naturally reverted to the study of Renaissance models. In the sculpture of the Renaissance only could they find nature represented as she appeared to them. There only could they find the modern man with his pronounced individuality and his special development of character, and there only could they find the means of representing him in their art. And so, jumping over four hundred years, jumping over the inroad of academicism and the consequent stupefaction of art, the best sculpture of to-day is the legitimate successor to that of the fifteenth century—its successor, not its imitator. The sculptors of to-day are working in the spirit of the Renaissance, but the very essence of that spirit is personality—individualism—independent study.

Now, having a general view of the movement of which he is a part, we are prepared to approach the work of Saint-Gaudens himself, and to search there the qualities of his school and their particular development by his own personality.

The feeling for individuality,—the modern idea that a man is not merely one of a species, but is a character,—the caring less for the perfection of a race and more for the man himself as he is, with his defects as well as his merits, is one of the noticeable qualities

of Mr. Saint-Gaudens's work. It is easy to see in his Farragut how he has been penetrated with the personality of his model and has bent himself to its expression. The statue is as living as one of Mino da Fiesole's Florentines, who died four hundred years ago, and whom we should be quite prepared to meet in the streets as we come out of the museum where his likeness is preserved. There is no cold conventionalism, neither is there any romanticism or melodrama, but a penetrating imagination which has got at the heart of the man and given him to us "in his habit as he lived," cool, ready, determined, standing firmly, feet apart, upon his swaying deck, a sailor, a gentleman, and a hero. In his Randall statue at Sailors' Snug Harbor, there is much of the same quality, for though, from the lack of authentic portraits, this latter was necessarily a pure work of imagination, yet it is none the less a portrait of a man—an individual—if not precisely the Randall whose name it bears. There is nothing of the ideal Greek hero about this rugged block of humanity. This kindly, keen, alert, old man, sharp-eyed, hooked-nosed, firm-mouthed, with a sea-breeze in his look, is a modern and an American and, one would say, an old sailor, with crotchets and eccentricities as well as a strong head and a good heart.*

* I believe that, in point of fact, Randall was not a sailor. The text refers to the type selected by the sculptor, not to the historic man.

Another and somewhat later work in the same line of what we may call ideal portraiture is the "Deacon Chapin," which is perhaps the finest embodiment of Puritanism in our art. Surely those old searchers for a liberty of conscience that should not include the liberty to differ from themselves could not fail to recognise in this swift-striding, stern-looking old man, clasping his Bible as Moses clasped the tables of the law and holding his peaceful walking-stick with as firm a grip as the handle of a sword—surely they could not fail to recognise in him a man after their own hearts. But he is not merely a Puritan of the Puritans, he is a man also, a rough-hewn piece of humanity enough, with plenty of the old Adam about him; and one feels that so and not otherwise must some veritable old Puritan deacon have looked.

In these statues it is easy, I say, to see the spirit of the Renaissance, but to show the appropriation of Renaissance methods and the rare technical skill with which they are employed in the embodiment of this spirit is a more difficult task, and in attempting it I wish more especially to draw attention to a class of work which was particularly characteristic of the Italian Renaissance, and in the revival of which Mr. Saint-Gaudens seems to me one of the most successful of modern sculptors. I mean low-relief. Something of what he can do in this way any one may see in the allegorical figures on the base of the Farragut monument, and, I remember, these figures were even more

of a revelation to me of his ability than was the statue itself. For the question whether or not a given statue is great and heroic in conception one can only answer to one's self, and one can never be quite sure that the answer is the true one; but the question whether a sculptor has the knowledge and the skill to handle low-relief, that one can quite definitely settle. One can even hope to convince another that his conclusion is correct.

The sculptors of the Italian Renaissance may be said, in a sense, almost to have invented low-relief. In the struggle to depict the infinite variety of things that was necessary to their modern nature, and yet to avoid the mere matter-of-fact, which is fatal to art, —in their desire to be real without being realistic,— they naturally turned to a part of their art which is the nearest akin to painting, and they pushed it to a degree of perfection which has never been known before or since. Low-relief does not deal with actual form, but with the appearance of form, and the more perfect it is the farther it is apt to be from an actual copying of the forms of nature. The common conception of a medallion is probably that it is half of a head placed upon a flat surface, but this conception is the farthest possible from being the true one. Even the idea that while the projection is much less than in nature the *relations* of projection remain the same, is not much nearer the truth. In good relief work, for instance, the head frequently projects more than

the shoulder. The fact is that low-relief is a kind of *drawing* by means of light and shade, the difference between it and any other kind of drawing being that the lights and shadows are produced not by white paper or crayon strokes, but by the falling of the light upon the elevations and depressions of the surface of the relief; and these elevations and depressions are regulated solely by the amount of light or shadow which the sculptor desires and are almost arbitrary in their relations to the projection of the model. As the painter concentrates the light and shade upon the head, so does the sculptor, by increasing its projection; as the painter varies the tone of his background, so does the sculptor, by slight undulations which catch the light, or turn into pale shadow, vary his: he even uses outline and cuts fine trenches of shadow round the edges of his figures here and there, where greater definition seems desirable. He can produce the effect of distance by flattening his modelling and so reducing both the light and shadow, and he can mark the importance of any part which is most interesting to him by giving it greater relief. His figures now lose themselves utterly in the background and now emerge into sudden crispness of form as may best suit his purpose. His relief is a picture which he fashions with delicate use of light and dark, thinking always of the effect of the whole, and never of the imitation of any one piece of form.

Low-relief is thus an art nearly allied to painting

and one which deals with aspects rather than with facts, and its exercise calls for the highest powers of perception and execution which the artist possesses. The lower the relief the greater—the more marvellous—the delicacy of modelling required to give the proper relations of light and shadow. It is at the same time, for him who understands it, the most delightful resource against the sculptor's greatest danger, the matter-of-fact. Therefore it has been a favourite art with sculptors, and success in it is one of the best available measures, both of the power and purity of artistic conception, and of the technical ability, of a given sculptor. Saint-Gaudens's success in it has been very great. Such reliefs as that of the two Butler children, for instance, must be seen and studied in the originals to be understood, it being impossible for any drawing or photograph to give an adequate idea of the sweet fluency of modelling and of the marvellous economy of means (getting with an infinitesimal projection enough variety of shadow to convey a complete impression of nature) which place them among the most remarkable productions of our times.

That they are lovely in themselves, full of sweet, pure feeling, of beautiful composition and subtle grace of line, reproductions may indeed help one to see, but the exquisite fineness, which is power, of the workmanship, the beauty of surface, caressed into delicate form which in a direct light is invisible,

nothing but the reliefs themselves can show one. They are masterpieces of skill and knowledge.

So far we have been considering Mr. Saint-Gaudens's work in professed portraiture, whether in the round or in relief, and have seen in it the two dominating qualities of the Renaissance,—individuality of conception and delicate suavity of modelling. We have now to consider a more purely ideal class of works, such as the caryatids for the house of Cornelius Vanderbilt and the angels of the Morgan monument (so unfortunately destroyed by fire), and to see how in them the same qualities are combined and carried out together. At first sight the caryatids might seem more Greek than Renaissance in feeling. The costume, the large amplitude of form, the dignity and repose of the figures, are very Greek. But one soon sees that there is something there which is other than Greek. The modern mind has been at work, and in these ideal figures there is a vague air of portraiture. If they are not women who *have* lived, they are women who might have lived and have loved and, assuredly, have been loved. Serenely beautiful as they are, one does not feel before them, as before the great Greek statues, the awe and admiration of abstract beauty, but rather the kind of tender personal feeling that the *Femme Inconnue* of the Louvre inspires. They are not goddesses, but women; alike, yet different, each, one feels, with her own character, her own virtues, and, perhaps, her own faults. Here,

then, is the note of the Renaissance, the love of individuality, and its complement in the manner of the execution is equally present. These figures are almost entirely detached, and yet in the paleness of the modelling and in the avoidance of deep hollows and dark shadows,—the chisel never quite going into the depths of the form, but leaving, as it were, a diaphanous veil between it and our eyes and a mystery for the imagination to penetrate,—we find even here the principle of low-relief.

We find this principle of low-relief even more readily in the angels of the Morgan tomb, and I think, to go back a little, we can find it even in the Farragut. For, though the ruggedness of the type, the material, and the necessity for distant effect demanded depth of shadow, we find in the very means of getting this shadow the lesson of low-relief, that it is the appearance of nature and not the absolute fact that is of importance. The figure was first modelled in the nude with great care, but, when Mr. Saint-Gaudens came to put the costume upon it, he had often to disregard the actual form underneath and to work for the effect of his final surfaces on the eye. In order to get the *look* of nature he had to disregard the absolute fact.

I have dwelt at considerable length on the likeness of Saint-Gaudens's work to that of an epoch which he has deeply studied and deeply loves, because it seemed to me that in that way only I could show its great

technical merit; but it by no means follows that his work is not original. On the contrary, he could not show the spirit of the Renaissance if he were not strongly individual. As I have said, the essence of the Renaissance spirit is individuality, and in nothing is Saint-Gaudens more like the great artists of the fifteenth century than in that he is eminently original and that the personal note is strongly felt in all his work. His figures are such as no other man than himself could have made them; his types of beauty are those that appeal most to his own nature and his own peculiar temperament. This temperament one cannot quite analyse, but one can readily discover one or two elements that enter largely into it. Two of these are virility and purity. The manly directness and straightforward simplicity of such works as the Farragut and the Chapin are among their most readily visible characteristics and the caryatids or the angels of the Morgan monument are as pure as they are lovely. In the sweet-flowing grace of movement, in the refined beauty of face and form of these angels, all intent upon their celestial harpings, sensuousness never touches the limits of sensuality. They are as pure as a madonna of Fra Angelico's.

The sculptor of such works as these was already an artist of intelligence, learning, and imagination, with a great and distinguished talent, who had done much and from whom we were sure of far more.

SAINT-GAUDENS'S "SHERMAN"

NO event has ever taken place in this country of equal artistic importance with the unveiling of the heroic equestrian statue of General Sherman by Augustus Saint-Gaudens. Our public monuments are not always such as a civilised nation should be proud of, but we have unquestionably produced, both in painting and in sculpture, much respectable and some excellent work. In the Sherman statue we have much more than this—we have, in an American city, a monument which, in conception and in execution, is among the half-dozen masterpieces of its kind in the world. The history of such a work must always be interesting, and it is well to set down now, before they are forgotten, the main facts and dates of its production.

Eleven years elapsed between the commissioning of the statue, in 1892, and the unveiling on Memorial Day, May 30, 1903. Undoubtedly, the time seemed long to the committee in charge of the work, but Saint-Gaudens is one of those artists for whom it is worth while to wait. During three of the eleven years his work was much interrupted by a grave illness; during the other eight years he was more or less constantly at work upon the group, and he estimates

PUVIS DE CHAVANNES: "THE SACRED WOOD"

that it cost him about three years of actual labour. His infinite painstaking, his constant revision, his inability to rest satisfied with anything if he could conceive of a possible betterment, spread the three years out over the eight.

The sketch was completed in a few months and accepted by the committee; in it the essential features of the group were fixed, and they have not been materially altered. This is important as showing that the conception of the Victory-led rider antedated by some years any possible knowledge of the somewhat similar conception of Bégas's "Emperor William" in Berlin. By a strange coincidence, then, the same idea, wholly new in art, seems to have occurred at about the same time to two artists widely distant in space. In the intervals of other work, during the next five years, the horse and rider were modelled on a small scale and the Victory was studied in the nude. In 1897 Mr. Saint-Gaudens went to Paris and there began the full-sized group, devoting most of his time to it, and in 1899 the horse and rider, without the Victory, were exhibited at the Salon of the Champ de Mars. The merit of the statue was at once recognised, and it was given a place of honour and greatly praised by artists and critics. At the Paris Exposition of 1900 the whole group, in plaster, was seen for the first time, and for it and a group of earlier works the sculptor was awarded a *grand prix*.

In spite of this success, he was not satisfied with

the work. It was to be cast in Paris, but returning, seriously ill, to this country, he brought a plaster cast with him, built a studio near Windsor, Vt., in which to set it up, and began making changes. He remodelled the head of the Victory, her wings and palm branch, the cloak of the rider, and various smaller details, and sent the remodelled parts to the bronze-founders in Paris. The group, with these changes, was then sent, still in plaster, to the Pan-American Exposition at Buffalo, where it was the principal cause of an extraordinary honour to the artist. The jury of the section of Fine Arts, composed of painters, sculptors, and architects, unanimously recommended that a Special Diploma and Medal of Honour, apart from and above all other awards in the Exposition, be created for Mr. Saint-Gaudens, and the recommendation was adopted by the general jury, and the award was made. This success, like former ones, seems to have been a signal to the artist to recommence his struggle for perfection. The bronze was brought to Windsor and set up in the open air, and experiments in gilding and toning were begun, while the base was remodelled and twice cut in granite. Finally, in the spring of 1903, the work was ready to be shipped to New York and placed upon its pedestal in the Plaza, near the entrance to Central Park.

The type of artistic temperament which leads to continual changes and reworkings is not without its

special dangers which a more positive and self-assured mind—what the French call an "*esprit primesautier*"—escapes. It has even happened to Mr. Saint-Gaudens to produce a work the final form of which he would now admit to be inferior to the original conception. When, however, the original conception is clear and tenaciously held, the revision of details tends only to greater purity and beauty of statement, as it has done in the present instance. Sherman had seemed to the boyish Saint-Gaudens the typical American hero; to the matured artist he had sat for an admirable bust. When the sculptor was called upon to prepare the monument to the great soldier, he was equipped with a knowledge of his subject which the designer of a posthumous statue rarely possesses, and with a genuine enthusiasm for his task. His idea came to him in such definite and vigorous form that his subsequent labour was but the refining of details; he was sure of his masterpiece from the start.

The Sherman monument is the latest term in the long evolution of a remarkable talent. In its earlier stages this talent might have seemed more decorative—almost more pictorial—than purely sculptural. To many it appeared that Saint-Gaudens's best things were his dainty portrait reliefs of women and children, his exquisite caryatids and angelic figures; wonderful play of line and a delicate caressing of surface seemed his most notable characteristics.

These characteristics he has retained, but in one after another of his more important works he has shown an ever-increasing grasp of structural form and a steady growth in masculine vigour of conception, until he has revealed himself a great sculptor in the stricter sense, as he was already a great artist.

The group is about twice the size of life in each dimension, so that the figure of the General, if standing, would be about twelve feet high. Tall and erect he sits his horse, his military cloak bellying out behind him, his trousers strapped down over his shoes, his hat in his right hand, dropping at arm's length behind the knee, and his bare head, like that of an old eagle, looking straight forward. The horse is as long and thin as his rider, with a tremendous stride; and his big head, closely reined in, twitches viciously at the bridle. Before the horse and rider, half walks, half flies, a splendid winged figure—one arm outstretched, the other brandishing the palm—Victory leading them on. She has a certain fierce wildness of aspect, but her rapt gaze and half-open mouth indicate the seer of visions: peace is ahead and an end of war. On the bosom of her gown is broidered the eagle of the United States, for she is an American Victory, as this is an American man on an American horse; and the broken pine bough beneath the horse's feet localises the victorious march—it is the march through Georgia to the sea.

One of the most remarkable things about the group

is the extraordinary sense of movement and of irresistible force conveyed by it. The gait of the horse is only a quick walk, but horse and rider and striding Victory move onward with a rush, and one feels that nothing can arrest their progress. The base of the statue is not of bronze, as is usual, but is cut in a pinkish granite like that of the pedestal, and, though it has been gilded like the figures, the difference in colour and texture which remains seems to aid the sense of motion by separating the figures from the ground which they move over rather than grow out of. The whole treatment of colour and texture is rather daring and altogether successful, and gives the monument a decorative beauty and splendour which does not detract from its inherent gravity. The Greeks, builders of chryselephantine statues, would have appreciated this. A most interesting artifice, not found in the original sketch, is the change of level in the base. The ground slopes slightly upward from the rear until it is highest just in front of the forefoot of the horse, then falls rapidly to the front. This gives greater height to the figure of Sherman, while increasing the sense of strain and push in the hind-quarters of the horse; but its most remarkable effect is in giving a sort of downward flutter to the Victory, so that, though marching on the ground, she seems newly lighted there from a previous aërial existence. From every point of view the composition builds up superbly. The flow of line in wing and

limb and drapery is perfect; the heads are magnificent in characterisation; the anatomical structure, human and equine, is thoroughly understood; and the surface modelling is beautiful in the extreme.

The finest equestrian statue of modern times is unquestionably the earliest of all in date, the "Gattamelata" by Donatello in Padua. In serene dignity and restrained strength it has never been approached, and is perhaps unapproachable. Its air of quiet courage and determination makes the picturesque swagger of Verrocchio's "Colleone" at Venice seem almost theatrical by comparison. We can only guess what Leonardo would have done or what Michelangelo might have done, and there are really no more equestrian statues of high rank until our own day. Artists even forgot how a horse walks, and critics still repeat that the gait represented by Donatello and Verrocchio is an "amble." Of more recent works the two finest seem to me to be the "Jeanne d'Arc" by Fremiet, in the Place des Pyramides, and the other "Jeanne d'Arc" by Paul Dubois. Fremiet's statue, in its earlier form, was infinitely charming rather than great. He has remodelled it, and the general opinion seems to be that the added robustness of the figure has not attained to grandeur, while there has been some loss of charm. Dubois's Jeanne is also a slim and dainty figure with a certain quaintness of attitude and a quality of spiritual beauty. Both of these statues are, technically, masterpieces, but they

are not more masterly in execution than is Saint Gaudens's "Sherman," and they are, perhaps, less imaginative and original in conception, and have certainly less of heoric grandeur. Before them both, and immediately after the "Colleone," if after it at all, I should be inclined to place the most recent of the world's great equestrian statues.

INDEX

Artists are entered under the name by which they are most commonly called, as Perugino, Raphael, Titian.

Adams (Herbert), influenced by Renaissance sculpture, 3
Æsthetic Cult, the, 169
Allston (Washington), really of English school, 144
Amiens, Museum, decorations in, 210, 213, 214, 219-221
Angelico (Fra Giovanni, da Frisole), 37, 278
  the simplicity of ignorance, 222-223
Art, American, future of, 148
Art, governmental organisation of, in France, 193
Arts and Crafts movement, 142

Baldry (A. L.), his criticism of Millais as landscape painter, 169
Barocci (Federigo), his influence on Rubens, 99
  exaggerated curves, 99
Bastien-Lepage (Jules), naturalism of, 141
Baudry (Paul-Jacques-Aimé), 140, 148
  temporary eclipse of his reputation, 143
  a product of the academic system, 193
  birth and early training, 194

Baudry—*Continued*
  pensioned by town and department, 194
  student days in Paris, 194-195
  Prix de Rome at twenty-one, 195
  study in Italy and early works, 195-196
  earliest mural paintings, 196
  honours and commissions, 196
  preparation for the Opéra, 196-197
  copies of Michelangelo and Raphael, 197
  member of the Institute, 197
  volunteer in Franco-German war, 197
  exhibition of decorations for Opéra, 197
  later works, 198
  death, 198
  parallel with Raphael, 199
  an absorbent, 199
  his borrowings, 199
  his successive manners, 200
  early portraits, 201
  and easel pictures, 202
  middle portraits, 202

Baudry—*Continued*
great decorations, 143, 203-206
intellectual merit of, 203-204
his style contrasted with that of Puvis, 204
his power of composition, 205
of drawing, 143, 205-206
his later manner, 206-207
virtuosity, 207
completeness of his achievement, 208
lack of great originality, 208
admirableness of his art, 209
Baudry, works of
Theseus in the Labyrinth, 195
Jacob and the Angel, 195
Fortune and the Child, 195, 196
copy of Raphael's Jurisprudence, 196, 200-201
Punishment of a Vestal, 196
The Wave and the Pearl, 196, 202, 207
Diana Driving away Love, 198, 202, 207
Truth, 208
The Five Cities of Italy, 196, 201
Glorification of the Law, 198, 201, 207
St. Hubert, 198
Ceiling for W. H. Vanderbilt, 198
Ceiling for Cornelius Vanderbilt, 198
L'Enlèvement de Psyché, 198
Ceiling for Count Henckel Donnersmarck, 203
The Muses, Opéra, 203, 208
The Judgment of Paris, Opéra, 204, 206
Pastoral Music, Opéra, 205
Military Music, Opéra, 205
Portrait of Guizot, 201
Portrait of Madeleine Brohan, 201
Portrait of Comte de Palikao, 198, 207
Portrait of Mme. Bernstein and Son, 198, 206
Portrait of Louis de Montebello, 208
Bégas (Reynold), his statue of Emperor William, 208
Bell (Malcolm), defends Burne-Jones, 179-180
Bellini (Gentile), 48
Bellini (Giovanni), Dürer's opinion of, 49
anecdote of with Dürer, 91-92
Bellini, works of
The Frari Madonna, 49
Madonna of San Zaccaria, 49
Saints Jerome, Christopher and Augustine, 49
Berenson (Bernhard), his characterization of Perugino, 11,
his theory of "space composition," 17
Bernini (Giovanni Lorenzo), 99
Bitumen, ravages of, 136, 151
Wappers's use of, 150-151

Blake (William), question of his sanity, 127-128
his lack of education, 128
his apprenticeship, 128
his hatred of the colourists and of chiaroscuro, 128
his exaltation of definition, 128
inability to work from nature, 128-129
his visions, 127, 129, 132
advantage of his dry manner, 129
lack of precision in his writings, 129-130
belief in Ossian and Rowley, 130
lyrical beauty of early poems, 130
his "Prophetic Books," 130
their vagueness and lack of form, 130, 131
merits and faults as an artist, 131
feeling for the weird and for style, 131
"Inventions to the Book of Job," 131
reminiscences of Michelangelo, 131
"The Morning Stars Singing Together," 132
Blashfield (Edwin Howland), 148
his anecdote of Bonnat and Maspero, 184
Boecklin (Arnold), his imaginative genius, 142
Boldini (Giovanni), change of scale in his work, 185
virtuosity of, 207
Bolton (Charles Knowles), his life of Saskia, 115
his method described, 116-117
Bonifazio Venetiano, 50
Bonnat (Léon), anecdote of with Maspero, 184
his decorations in the Panthéon, 217
Bordone (Paris), 50
Boston Public Library, decorations in, 75, 216, 225, 255-256
Boston, Trinity Church, decorations in, 147
Botticelli (Alessandro Filippi, called), 19, 64
Boucher (François), compared to Tiepolo, 61
Bramante (Donato Lomazzo, called), Michelangelo's praise of, 28
Bréal (Auguste), defence of Rembrandt's realism, 121-123
on Rembrandt's drawing, 125
Breton (Jules), his opinion of Baudry's later manner, 206
Brown (Ford Madox), 169
his importance in Preraphaelite movement, 149
its precursor, 149
master of Rossetti and Hunt, 149
not a member of the brotherhood, 149
his distrust of cliques, 150
birth and early studies, 150
pupil of Gregorius and Wappers, 150
working in Paris, 151

Brown—*Continued*
influence of Delaroche, 151
painting in open air, 151
back to bitumen, 151
voyage to Italy, 152
Holbein, the Nazarenes, and the early Italians, 152
settles in England, 152
English art of that day, 152-153
stepping backwards, 154
Rossetti's letter to, 155
founding of P. R. B., 156
Preraphaelite practice, 161-162
precursor of aesthetic movement, 163
a founder of "the firm," 163
overshadowed by Rossetti and Burne-Jones, 163
characteristics of his art, 163-164
his death, 149
his conscientiousness, 171
Brown, works of
Mary Queen of Scots Going to Execution, 151
Manfred, 151
Harold, 152
Adam and Eve, 152
The Spirit of Justice, 152
Chaucer at the Court of Edward III., 153
Portrait of Mr. Bamford, 153-154
Wycliffe Reading His Translation of the Bible to John of Gaunt, 153, 155
The Last of England, 160, 162
Brown—*Continued*
Work, 160, 162
Stages of Cruelty, 161
Cordelia's Portion, 163
Elijah and the Widow's Son, 163
Decorations in Manchester Town Hall, 164
Brush (George DeForest), 147
Burne-Jones (Sir Edward), 141-142, 163
influenced by Rossetti, 160
ridiculed and admired, 176
weakness of early work, 177
development of personal style, 177
his mannerisms and merits, 177-178
his archaism, 179-182
not a literary painter, 179-180
his allegories "will not bite," 180
studies from nature, 180
pastiche, 180
imitation of Mantegna, 180
of Gothic sculpture, 181
of the Byzantines, 181
a remarkable creative artist, 182
Burne-Jones, works of
Chant d'Amour, 177
The Wine of Circe, 177
The Angels of Creation, 177, 178-179
The Mirror of Venus, 177
The beguiling of Merlin, 177-178, 180
The Annunciation, 180

Burne-Jones—*Continued*
Dies Domini, 181
Sponsa di Libano, 181
Mosaics in Church of Holy Trinity, Rome, 181
Window in St. Peter's Church, Vere St., London, 181
Designs of the Seasons, 182

Cabanel (Alexandre), his decorations in the Panthéon, 217
Caravaggio (Michelangelo Amerighi, called), his influence discernible in Baudry's "Theseus," 200
Carolus Duran, 260
Carpaccio (Vittore), 48
Cellini (Benvenuto), his opinion of Michelangelo's "Battle of Pisa," 34
his goldsmith work, 211
Chase (William Merritt), 147
Chavannes (Pierre-Domachin, Sieur de), 212
Chiaroscuro, dependent on mystery, 261
Blake's hatred of, 128
primitive, 223
Japanese, 223
Correggio's, 56
Tintoretto's, 56
Veronese's, 70, 75, 76
Rembrandt's, 123, 126
Classic and Romantic tempers, 26-30, 97-98
Claude Gelee, called Loraine, his influence on Corot, 138
Colleone, Verrocchio's statue of, 285, 286
Colour, its relation to naturalism, 4
Colour—*Continued*
highest beauty of, incompatible with virtuosity, 260-261
dependent on mystery, 261
Composition, Raphael's mastery of, 77
Veronese's analysed, 78-81
Leonardo's science of, 80
Baudry's, 205
Constable (John), 151
influence of Rubens upon, 103
transmits Rubens's influence to France, 137
near his end, 153
Copley (John Singleton), really of English school, 144
Cornelius (Peter), 152
Corot (Jean-Baptiste-Camille), 224
his art founded on Claude, 138
his study of values, 138
his poetic feeling, 138
Correggio (Antonio Allegri, called), 37
his chiaroscuro and affectations, 56
influence on Prudhon, 136 and Baudry, 195, 200
Courbet (Gustave), influence of, on Whistler and Manet, 231-232, 236
Couture (Thomas), 144, 213

David (Jacques-Louis), 136
Davies (Gerard B.), conjecture as to Hals's master, 106
Decoration, a great branch of art, 210-211
problem of, 212

Decoration—*Continued*
Veronese's conception of, 75
as dependent on design and subordination of modelling, 76
Decoration, American,
influenced by Puvis de Chavannes, 75
by the Byzantines and Pintoricchio, 76
beginnings of, 147
merits of, 148
Decoration, modern,
Arts and Crafts movement, 142
poster mania, 142
Degas (Hilaire-Germain-Edgard), 139
Delacroix (Eugène), 151
his admiration of Rubens, 98
intellectual force of, 136
breaks classical tradition, 136
influenced by English school, 137
Dewing (Thomas W.), 147
Delaroche (Paul), influence of, on F. M. Brown, 151
Delaunay (Elie), his portraits, 140
Donatello (Donato di Betto Bardi, called), 3
his influence on Michelangelo, 32-33
his St. George, 33
his Gattamelata, 285
Dou (Gerard), Rembrandt's first pupil, 118
Drawing, by the line or by the mass, 262
Michelangelo's, 38, 205
Titian's, 38
Hals's, 110, 262
Rembrandt's, 125-126
Drawing—*Continued*
TerBorch's, 188
Meissonier's, 188
Millet's, 137
Puvis de Chavannes's 143, 219, 220, 222
Baudry's, 143, 205-206
Sargent's, 145, 260-263
Drolling (Martin), 194
Dubois (Paul), influenced by Renaissance sculpture, 3
his Florentine Singer, 3
his St. John Baptist, 3
his Jeanne d'Arc, 285-286
Dupré (Jules), 249
Dutch school, contemporaneity of subject, 187
soundness and naïveté of drawing, 188
management of light, 188
Rembrandt's gift to, 112
Dutch school, modern, 249
Dürer (Albrecht), his opinion of Bellini, 49
the least specially artistic of artists, 82
his writings, 82
dates of birth and death, 82
his personal character, 83-84
as religious reformer, 85-86
apostrophe to Erasmus, 85
Wein, Weib, und Gesang, 85
his curiosity, 86
Melancthon's opinion of him, 86-87
compared to Leonardo, 87
theories of human proportions, 87-89
reverence for numbers, 88-89

Dürer—*Continued*
slight sense of beauty, 90
reverence for fact, 87, 90
his ideal of painting, 90
minuteness, 91
sureness of hand, 91
anecdote of, with Bellini, 91-92
as engraver, 92-94
accuracy and expressiveness his aims, 93-94
the representative of his age, 94-95
Dürer, works of
illustrations to the Apocalypse, 85
Melencolia, 93
Knight and Death, 93

Eastlake (Sir Charles), 153
English school, the influence of, 137
descended from Rubens, 137
early American painters a part of, 144
in the forties, 153
Equestrian Statues—
Colleone, by Verrocchio, 285, 286
Gattamelata, by Donatello, 285
Jeanne d'Arc, by Dubois, 285-286
Jeanne d'Arc, by Fremiet, 285-286
Emperor William, by Bégas, 208
Sherman, by Saint-Gaudens, unveiling of, 279
importance of, 279
commission for, 279
sketch for, 280
exhibited, 280-281
honours awarded it, 280-281

Equestrian Statues—*Cont'd*
preparation for, 282
description of, 283-285
relative rank of, 286
Etty (William), 153
Exhibitions, disadvantages of, 212
influence of, 140
Exposition, Centennial, 144
Exposition, 1900, showed existence of American school, 144
Eyck (Jan Van), 90, 249, 263

Falguière (Jean-Alexandre-Joseph), 3, 267
Femme Inconnue, Louvre, 10, 276
Fiesole (Mino da), 3, 270
Flesh-painting, not compatible with great frankness of handling, 260
Fourment (Helena), her marriage to Rubens, 101
in portraits and pictures, 101-102
Francia (Francesco Raibolini, called), works of, disliked by Michelangelo, 28
Fremiet (Emanuel), his Jeanne d'Arc, 285-286
French (Daniel Chester), influenced by Renaissance sculpture, 3
Frith (William Powell), 153
Fromentin (Eugène), 137, 259
reveals Hals to the world, 105
calls attention to similarity between pictures by Rembrandt and Hals, 110
his analysis of Rem-

Fromentin—*Continued*
brandt's genius, 123-125
Fuller (George), 144

Gainsborough (Thomas), 258
influence of Rubens upon, 103
transmits Flemish influence, 137
Galland (P. V.), his decorations in the Sorbonne, 218
Garnier (Charles), architect of Paris Opéra, 196
Gattemelata, Donatello's statue of, 285
Gautier (Théophile), critical discrimination of, 213
Gèrôme (Jean-Léon), 140
Ghiberti (Lorenzo), 32
Michelangelo's praise of, 28
pictorial effect of his reliefs, 35
Ghirlandajo (Domenico di Tommaso Curradi di Doffo Bigordi, called), 19
master of Michelangelo, 20
Giorgione (Giorgio Barbarelli, called), 83, 90
birth of, 19
country born, 68
reduced to myth, 50
Giorgione, works of
Soldier and Gypsy, 50
Apollo and Daphne, 50
Partie Champêtre, 50
Giotto di Bordone, 19, 143, 221
the simplicity of ignorance, 222-223
Gleyre (Charles), master of Whistler, 231

Hals (Frans), 207, 249
handling of compared to Tintoretto's, 58-59
modernness of his reputation, 104
discovered by painters, 104
influence upon Manet and Whistler, 105
lack of authentic facts about, 105
date of birth, 106
possibly studied first with Van Noort, 106
probable character of early work, 107
his limitations, 107-108
a pure portraitist, 108
compared to Titian, Velasquez and Rembrandt, 108
a realist, 109
his ideal in his handling, 109
his certainty of touch, 109
his draughtsmanship, 110 262, 263
possible influence of Rembrandt upon, 110-112
decline of his powers, 113
last works, 114
his death, 114
place in art, 114
compared to Sargent, 265
Hals, works of
Banquet of St. Joris's Shooting Guild of 1616, 106
Banquet of St. Adriæn's Shooting Guild of 1633, 110
Banquet of St. Joris's Shooting Guild of 1639, 111

Hals—*Continued*
Regents of St. Elisabeth's Hospital, 110, 112
The Merry Toper, 111
Maria Voogt, 111
Old Lady of Bridgewater Gallery, 111, 112
Feyntje van Steenkiste, 112
Regents of the Oudemannehuis, 114
Handling, right, two kinds of, 259
greatest brilliancy of, incompatible with finest colour and light and shade, 261
the expression of form with the brush, 262
Tintoretto's, 59
Veronese's, 67-68
Rubens's, 100
Hals's, 109, 249
Velasquez's, 261
Baudry's, 206-207
Whistler's, 240, 249
Sargent's, 259
Haydon (Benjamin Robert), better critic than painter, 152
Helst (Bartholomew Vander), accomplished mediocrity of, 125
Hendrickje Stoffels, Rembrandt's mistress, 120
uncertainty as to marriage, 97
as model, 117, 121
in partnership with Titus, 120
her death, 120
Hilton (William), his abuse of bitumen, 151
Holbein (Hans, the Younger), 83, 94, 249
Holbein—*Continued*
as portrait painter, 95
influence of on F. M. Brown, 152
Homer (Winslow), nationality and personality of his art, 146
sense of weight of water, 147
figure pictures, 147
Hunt (Holman), 169
advised by F. M. Brown, 149
the constant Preraphaelite, 150
discovers Orcagna, 155
his account of reason for not electing F. M. Brown to P. R. B., 156
his first studio, 156
minuteness of workmanship, 156
his naturalism and perseverance, 157-158
Preraphaelitism his natural language, 158
his small influence, 159
his lack of art, 160
influence on Millais, 166
his Rienzi, 156
Hunt (William Morris), pupil of Couture influenced by Millet, 144

Impressionism, its nature, 138-139
its probable influence, 139
its technique, 249
Ingres (Jean-Auguste-Dominique), 220
his hatred of Rubens, 98
influenced by Raphael, 136
beauty of line, 136
portraits, 136

Inness (George), 146
Insight, the portrait painter's, 263-264

Japanese art, shadelessness of, 223
Whistler's relation to, 236, 240, 244
Jeanne d'Arc, Dubois's statue of, 285-286
Fremiet's statue of, 285-286
Jouffroy (François), his *atelier*, 267

LaFarge (John), on Michelangelo, 39
work of, in stained glass, 147
decorative paintings by, 147
Lairesse (Gerard de), his criticism of Rembrandt, 121
Landscape, modern, indebtedness of, to Rubens, 103
extension of its methods to other branches, 137-139
begins in England, 137
Lastman (Pieter), master of Rembrandt, 118
Lauro (Agostino), engraving by, 167
Lawrence (Sir Thomas), continues English and Flemish traditions, 137
Laurens (Jean-Paul), his decorations in the Panthéon, 217, 219
Leonardo da Vinci, 19, 285
his Last Supper, 80
compared to Dürer, 87
his many-sidedness, 87

Da Vinci—*Continued*
letter to Sforza, 87
theories of human proportions, 87
indebtedness to Vitruvius, 87
love of beauty, 87-89
reminiscence of, in Baudry's Fortune, 200
Lenepveu (Jules-Eugène), 195
Lotto (Lorenzo), 51
Low relief, Greek use of, 7
Renaissance use of, 7, 272
principle of applied to sculpture in the round, 8, 276-277
deals with appearances rather than with facts, 272, 274
a kind of drawing, 273-274
Lyons, Museum, decorations in, 215

Maclise (Daniel), 153
Majano (Benedetto da), 3
Manchester town hall, decorations in, 164
Manet (Edouard), 145
influence of Hals and Velasquez upon, 105
imitation of Velasquez, 139
influenced by Monet, 139
feeling for material, 139
an initiator, 208
influence of Courbet upon, 231-232
his black manner, 236
Mantegna (Andrea), imitation of, by Burne-Jones, 180
Masaccio (Tomasso di Simone Guidi, called), 19

Masaccio—*Continued*
studied by Michelangelo, 20
Matsys (Quentin), 83
Meadows(Kenny), 153
Meissonier (Jean-Louis-Ernest), 140
his minute finish, 183
the result of near-sightedness, 183-185
his early development, 186
homogeneity of his work, 186
early work compared to the Dutch school, 187
his antiquarianism, 187
his draughtsmanship, 188
lack of success with colour and light, 188
his industry and accuracy, 189
lack of imagination and beauty, 189
his later work, 189-191
inadequacy of his methods to new tasks, 190
the "1814," 190
the "1807," 190-191
his character, 191-192
Mercié (Marius-Jean-Antoine), 267
influenced by Renaissance sculpture, 3
Metzu (Gabriel), refinement of, 121
Meynell, Mrs., 259
Michel (Emile), his life of Rembrandt, 115
his guesses, 116
mania for identification, 117
explanation of Rembrandt's realism, 121
Michelangelo Buonarotti Simoni, 67, 114, 137, 285
Michelangelo—*Continued*
contemporary opinion of, 18
birth of, 19
apprenticed to Ghirlandajo, 20
studies sculpture in Medici Gardens, 20
relations with Lorenzo de Medici, 20
studies Masaccio, 20
influence of Savonarola on, 21
leaves Florence the first time, 21
goes to Rome, 22
works there, 22
returns to Florence, 22
called to Rome by Julius II., 22
the "Tragedy" of the Tomb, 23
the Sistine Ceiling, 23
appointed architect to the Vatican, 24-25
last years, 25
death and burial, 25
his bad digestion, 25-26
his character, 26
habits, 27
generosity, 27
caustic tongue, 27
likes and dislikes, 28
impatience of collaboration, 28
melancholy, 29
religion, 29
friendship for Vittoria Colonna, 29
a romantic artist, 29
contrasted with Raphael, 29-30
the contrast repeated in Rembrandt and Rubens, 30
his three manners, 30

Michelangelo—*Continued*
essentially a sculptor, 31
influence of Donatello upon, 32-33
of Jacopo della Quercia, 33
finish of early work, 33, 144
realism, 33
insignificance of heads, 33
sculpturesque nature of his painting, 35
his grand style, 36
beauty, 37, 123
female figures, 37
as draughtsman, 38, 205
as colourist, 38-39, 64
his type of the human figure, 40
picturesqueness of later sculpture, 40
dependence on light and shade, 41-42
on unfinish, 6, 41-42
reasons for this, 43-45
parts most frequently unfinished, 44
modern imitation, 6, 44
his later paintings, 45-46
his relation to the decadence, 46
his destructive influence, 46-47, 126
his imagination not deadened by dissection, 129
imitated by Blake, 131
copies of by Rubens, 99
by Baudry, 197, 202
influence of, on Baudry, 203
Michelangelo, works of, in painting,
Doni Madonna, 22, 31, 34
Cartoon of Battle of Pisa, 22, 34
Leda, 24
Michelangelo—*Continued*
Sistine ceiling, 23-24, 36-39, 211
Creation of Adam, 37
Creation of Eve, 37
Libyan Sibyl, 37
Last Judgment, 25, 45
Frescoes in Pauline Chapel, 25, 45-46
Michelangelo, works of, in sculpture
Mask of a Faun, 20
The Centaurs, 20
Madonna in style of Donatello, 21, 31
Hercules, 21
Crucifix, 21 and note
Angel on Tomb of San Domenico, 22
John Baptist, 22, 31
Sleeping Cupid, 22, 31
Bacchus, 22, 31-32
Pietà, 22, 32, 33, 40
Cupid, 22
Madonna of Bruges, 22, 32
David, 22, 32, 33, 40, 43
Bronze David, 22
Pope Julius, 22
The Julian Tomb, 23, 39, 40
The Slaves, 23, 40
Moses, 43
The Risen Christ, 24, 43
The Medici Tombs, 24, 39-42
Lorenzo de' Medici, 42
Day, 42
Evening, 42
Millais (John Guille), "Life and Letters" of his father, 170
Millais (Sir John Everett), lack of intellectual influence of on P. R. B., 157

Millais—*Continued*
a clever executant, 157, 158
destined to success, 158
his Preraphaelitism only a period of study, 159
P. R. B. to P. R. A., 165
birth and parentage, 165
precocity, 166
the brotherhood, 166
influenced by Rossetti and Hunt, 166
in the fight, 166
first election as A. R. A. annulled, 166-167
Academy capitulated, 167
early outgrows Preraphaelite methods, 167
"one could not live doing that," 168
transition period, 168
Christmas *Graphic* style and election as Academician, 169
the favourite of the public, 169
because he saw with its eyes, 170
insensibility to purely artistic qualities, 171-172
interest in representation, 172
limited imagination, 172-173
technical ability, 173
attempts at grand art, 173
success as an illustrator, 174
and as a portrait painter, 174-175
Millais, works of
Supper at the House of Isabella, 156, 166
Millais—*Continued*
Ophelia, 165
The Huguenot, 165, 167, 172-173
Bubbles, 165
The Carpenter's Shop, 166
The Proscribed Royalist, 167, 170, 173
The Order of Release, 167, 173
Sir Isumbras at the Ford, 168
The Vale of Rest, 168
Apple Blossoms, 168
The Black Brunswicker, 168, 173
My First Sermon, 169
Chill October, 169
The Gambler's Wife, 173
Yes or No, 173
The Yeoman of the Guard, 173
Jephthah, 173
Victory, O Lord! 173
Cherry Ripe, 173
Illustrations to "Orley Farm," 174
Millet (Jean-François), places man in nature, 137
his composition, colouring, drawing, 137
influence on W. M. Hunt, 144
a profound poet, 208
the poverty of his peasants, 217
loose criticism of, 218
Monet (Claude), 143
his dissection of light, 139
Moore (Albert), anticipated by Whistler, 236
Moreau (Gustave), a French Rossetti, 142
Morris, Marshall, Falkner & Co., 163

Morris (William), 160
repetitions in his verse, 178
Mowbray (H. Siddons), 148
Music, modern, tends to become pictorial, 231

Nazarenes, the, 136
their use of term Preraphaelite, 152, 156
Near-sightedness, effect of, on style, 184-185
Neo-Preraphaelites, the, their practice reverses Preraphaelite teaching, 160
Noort (Adam Van), master of Rubens, 106
possibly of Hals, 106
Northcote (James), his opinion of Hals, 104, 108

Orcagna, frescoes attributed to, their influence on the Preraphaelites, 155
Overbeck (Friedrich), 152

Painting, nineteenth century, characterization of, 135
primacy of France in, 136
influence of exhibitions upon, 140
influence of photography upon, 140-141
Palma (Giacomo, il Vecchio), his Santa Barbara, 50
Panthéon, decorations in, 75, 148, 195, 204, 214, 216, 217
decorations for, by Baudry, never painted, 198, 204
Paris hôtel-de-ville, decorations in, 148, 215, 216
Paris Opéra, decorations in, 143, 193, 196-197, 202, 203-206
Parthenon, the, 211
figures from, 42
the Ilissus, 37
friezes of, 122
Pennell (Joseph), prefers Whistler to Rembrandt as etcher, 229
Perspective, Veronese's deliberate falsification of, 79
Perugino (Pietro Vannucci, called), mystery about, 11
Berenson's characterization of, 11
Williamson's defense of, 11, 12
bargain for burial of, 12
employment by church, 12, 13
Vasari's account of, 14
his commercialism, 14
his repetitions, 15, 16
his excuse, 16
mannerisms of, 16
Michaelangelo's dislike of, 16, 28
his craftsmanship, 16
his landscape painting, 16, 37
power of expressing space, 16, 17
Perugino, works of
Pazzi Crucifixion, 12, 15
San Severo Deposition, 12
Vallombrosa Assumption, 12
Vatican Resurrection, 15
Borgo San Sepolcro Ascension, 15
Florence Academy Crucifixion, 15
Florence Academy Assumption, 15

Perugino—*Continued*
St. Augustine's (Siena) Crucifixion, 16
Pheidias, grandeur of female figures by, 71
nobility of his style, 268
Photography, influence of, 140-141
Pintoricchio (Bernardino di Betto Bardi, called), merely a decorator, 64
his influence on American decoration, 76
Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, founding of, 156, 166
origin of name, 156
Preraphaelitism, 141, 149-164
its essential doctrines, 154
formulated by F. M. Brown, 154
not by Ruskin, 154, 157
made up of Hunt's realism and Rossetti's choice of subject, 157, 158, 166
an appeal to the boy or the savage, 161
its technical methods, 161-162, 170
becomes an æsthetic movement, 163
Prudhon (Pierre), influenced by Correggio, 136
use of bitumen, 136
power of flesh-painting, 136
Pordenone (Gio. Antonio Licinio Regillo da), 51
Poster mania, 142
Puvis de Chavannes (Pierre-Cecile), 148, 196
his influence on American decoration, 75
his composition, 143
his style contrasted with that of Baudry, 204,
Puvis—*Continued*
a living influence, 210
one of the greatest of modern decorators, 210
birth and family, 212
early studies, 213
attracted to study of decoration, 213
technical method, 213
principal works and honours, 213-216
an art of omissions, 216
should be judged in place, 216-217
decorative propriety, 217, 218
colouring, 218
his eliminations wilful, 219
early work comparatively realistic, 219-220
beauty of individual figures, 220
suppression of details for good of the whole, 220-221
for self-expression, 221-222
Greek simplicity and Gothic sentiment, 222
his drawing, 143, 222
his imitators, 223
his modernity, 223
use of values, 224
his landscape, 224
his eliminations sometimes excessive, 225
his manner not suited to rich surroundings, 225
his lesson to modern art, 226
his death, 210
Puvis de Chavannes, works of
Decorations of the Panthéon, 75

Puvis—*Continued*
Decorations of Boston Public Library, 75
Decoration of the Sorbonne (the Hemicycle), 144, 218
The Poor Fisherman, 217
Infancy of St. Geneviève, 217-218
War, 219, 220
Peace, 219, 220
Work, 220
Rest, 220
Ave, Picardia Nutrix, 220-221
Ludus pro Patria, 221, 224
Antique Vision, 222
Christian Inspiration, 222
The Sacred Wood, 222
Summer, 224
Winter, 224
Inter Artes et Naturam, 224-225

Quercia (Jacopo della), his influence on Michelangelo, 33

Raphael Santi, 67, 98, 220, 221
his power of representing space, 17
birth of, 19
influence of Michelangelo upon, 23
Michelangelo's misunderstanding of, 28
contrasted with Michelangelo, 29-30
sweetness of, 37
relation to the decadence, 46
his mastery of composition, 77

Raphael Santi—*Continued*
his idealism, 88
influence on Ingres, 136
on Baudry, 195, 198, 200, 208
parallel with Baudry, 198, 199
an absorbent, 199
copies of, by Baudry, 196 197, 200
Baudry's judgment of, 200-201
Raphael, works of
The Disputa, 200
The School of Athens, 200
Jurisprudence, 196, 200-201
Relief, in painting, degree of, affected by scale, 185-186
Rembrandt Harmens Van Ryn, 58, 64, 151
compared with Michelangelo, 30
contrasted with Rubens, 30, 96, 97
the legendary character of, 97
a romantic artist, 98
compared with Hals, 108, 114
possible influence on Hals, 110-112
his gift to the Dutch school, 112
his present fame and influence, 115
after long neglect, 115
lack of real knowledge of his life, 115-116
Michel's guesses, 116
the system burlesqued by Bolton, 116
his birth and early studies, 118
settles in Amsterdam and becomes fashionable, 119

Rembrandt—*Continued*
marriage, 119
collections, 119
decline of popularity, 119-120
failure of eye, 120
poverty and death, 120
criticisms of by Lairesse, 121
Michel, 121
Bréal, 121-123
Fromentin, 123-125
ugliness of figures by, 121
his broad subjects, 117, 122
his nudes, 121, 122, 123
beauty in ugliness, 122
indifference to form, 123
love of character and expression, 123
"physical ugliness and moral beauty," 123
his two natures, 124
observer and technician, 124
dreamer and idealist, 124
dreaming *mal à propos*, 125
final reconciliation, 125
not a colourist, 125
his drawing, 125-126
potential light and shade, 126
the picturesque point of view, 126
chiaroscuro, 123, 126
his profound and original mind, 126
influence on others, 126
his etchings compared with Whistler's, 229
Rembrandt, works of
Sobiesky, 117
St. Paul in Prison, 118
The Money Changer, 118
Rembrandt—*Continued*
The Anatomy Lesson, 112, 119
The Night Watch, 119, 125
The Syndics of the Cloth Hall, 110, 112, 120, 122, 125
The Gilder, 124
The Supper at Emmaus, 72, 124
Renaissance, lateness of, in the North, 83
Reynolds (Sir Joshua), 174, 258
owner of a portrait by Hals, 104
transmits Flemish influence, 137
Robbia (Luca della), 3
Rossetti (Dante Gabriel), 141, 159, 163
pupil of F. M. Brown, 149, 155
his signature in 1847, 155
laughs at Hunt's discovery of Orcagna, 155
his early methods, 156
an amateur of genius, 157
The Art Catholic, 158
his Preraphaelitism a temporary phase, 158-159
gives up working from nature, 159
tries to learn to paint, 159
influence on Morris and Burne-Jones, 160
on Millais, 166
the founder of a cult, 169
not a good illustrator, 174
his advice to Burne-Jones, 176-177

Rossetti—*Continued*
imitated by the latter, 177
temporary influence upon Whistler, 237
Rossetti, works of
Girlhood of Mary Virgin, 156
Found, 158
Lady Lilith, 159
Rouen, Museum, decorations in, 224-225
Rousseau (Théodore), his art founded on Rubens and the Dutch, 138
his naturalism, 138
Rubens (Peter Paul), compared with Raphael, 30
contrasted with Rembrandt, 30, 96-97
as colourist, 38
his lack of taste and reticence, 68
his accomplishments and splendour, 97
his essential classicism, 98
his faults those of his time, 98-99
influenced by Titian, 99
by Barocci, 99
his manner of drawing deliberately adopted, 99
his fecundity, 100
his use of assistants, 100
his methodicalness, 100
his handling, 100
compared with that of Tintoretto, 58-59
with that of Veronese, 67
a precursor, 101
his later work, 101-103
portraits of Helena Fourment, 101-102
influence on English portrait school, 102
Rubens—*Continued*
on Watteau, 102
his landscape, 102-103
influence on Gainsborough and Constable, 103
on nineteenth century painting, 137
on Rousseau, 138
Rubens, works of
drawings after Michelangelo, 99
Life of Marie de Medici, 101
The Fur Pelisse, 102
The Garden of Love, 102
Ruskin (John), 170
his theory of connection of colour and naturalism, 4
his admiration for Carpaccio, 48
his idolatry of Tintoretto, 54
false description of Tintoretto's "Baptism," 55
his admiration for Veronese, 63
not the founder of Preraphaelitism, 154, 157
his conception of Preraphaelitism, 158, 160
defends Millais, 166
becomes his opponent, 168
Millais's characterization of, 171
on two kinds of handling, 259

Saint-Gaudens (Augustus), influenced by Renaissance sculpture, 3, 269, 277
his birth and race, 266
apprenticed to a cameo cutter, 266
studies in Paris and Rome, 267

Saint-Gaudens—*Continued*
his first important commission, 267
his feeling for individuality, 270
earlier portrait statues, 270-271
reliefs, 272
their technical accomplishment, 274-275, 282
ideal figures, 275-276, 282
virility and purity of his work, 277
a grave illness, 279
his painstaking, 280
constant revision of his work, 281
dangers of, 281-282
advantages of, 282
growth in sculptural qualities, 283
Saint-Gaudens, works of
Farragut, 267, 270, 276-277
Randall, 270-271
Deacon Chapin, 271
Butler Children, 274
Caryatids for house of Cornelius Vanderbilt, 275-276
Angels of Morgan Monument, 275, 276
Bust of Sherman, 282
Statue of Sherman, 279-286. (See Equestrian Statues.)
Saint-Marceau (René de), 267
Sargent (John Singer), birth and training of, 145
his position and ability, 255-256
an observer rather than a composer, 256-257
best when most frankly modern, 258
Sargent—*Continued*
the realism of elegance, 258
his virtuosity, 145, 244, 258-260
his draughtsmanship, 145, 244, 260-263
his eye for character, 146, 263-264
his concern with aspects, 264
John Sargent, painter, 265
compared with Hals, 265 and Velasquez, 244, 265
Sargent, works of
El Jaleo, 257
Spanish Dance, 257
Carnation, Lily, Lily, Rose, 257
Children of E. D. Boit, 257
Lady Elcho, Mrs. Tennant, and Miss Adeane, 257
The Ladies Alexandra, Mary and Theo Acheson, 257-258
Miss Daisy Leiter, 258
Egyptian Girl, 262
Sartoris (Antoine), Baudry's first master, 194
Saskia van Ulenburgh, wife of Rembrandt, 115
nothing really known about, 116
Bolton's nonsense about, 116-117
as model, 117, 121
her marriage, 119
her death, 119
Scale in painting, its effect on relief, 185-186
Scheffer (Ary), 213
Scheffer (Henri), master of Puvis, 213

Scott (William Bell), his account of English art in the forties, 152-153
of the Preraphaelites, 156
his anecdote of Millais, 167-168
Sculpture, the most positive and simple of the arts, 267
its simplicity also its difficulty, 268
Sculpture, Greek, its abstraction, 6, 268
its simplicity of modelling, 222
Sculpture, Michelangelo's, dependence of on light and shade, 41-42
on unfinish, 6, 41-42
modern imitation of, 6, 44
Sculpture, Renaissance, its influence on the moderns, 3, 266, 269
its lowness of relief, 7
applied to sculpture in the round, 8
illusiveness of modelling, 8, 268, 275
naturalism and intimacy, 9, 269, 275
Signorelli (Luca), 19
frescoes at Orvieto, 35
Simmons (Edward), 148
Sistine Chapel, ceiling of, 23 24, 36-39, 211
Sorbonne, decorations in, 144, 215, 218
Space, Perugino's sense of, 16, 17
Berenson's theory of, 17
Raphael's sense of, 17
Veronese's suggestion of, 78
Stevens (Alfred), virtuosity of, 207
Stone (Frank), 153
Stuart (Gilbert), really of English school, 144
Swanenburch (Jacob van), Rembrandt's first master, 118

TerBorch (Gerard), 124
refinement of, 121
naiveté of his drawing, 188
Thayer (Abbot H.), 147
Tiepolo (Giovanni Battista), a bastard Veronese, 60-61
his cleverness and impudence, 61-62
lack of gravity, 62
Tiepolo, works of
Antony and Cleopatra, 61
Ceiling of the Gesuiti, 61
Ceiling of the Pietà, 61
Ceiling of the Scuola dei Carmini, 61
Tintoretto (Domenico), 58
Tintoretto (Jacopo Robusti, called), 51
his unevenness, 53
badness of his bad pictures, 53-54
especially in Scuola di San Rocco, 54-55
great merit of good ones, 55-59
his colour, 56
chiaroscuro, 56, 58, 70
his female types, 56
his gray manner, 57
his virtuosity, 58
compared to Hals, Rubens, and Velasquez, 58-59
his use of wax models, 59-60
Veronese's portrait of, 65

Tintoretto—*Continued*
Venetian birth of, 68
compared to Veronese as portraitist, 66
as chiaroscurist, 70
as draughtsman, 71
his Michelangelesque affectations, 71
Tintoretto, works of
Miracle of St. Mark, 51, 58-59
Massacre of the Innocents, 55
The Annunciation, 55
Baptism of Christ, 55
The Crucifixion, 55-57
Pallas driving away Mars, 56
Bacchus and Ariadne, 56
Saints Jerome and Andrew, 57
Saints Lewis, Margaret, and George with the Dragon, 57
The Crucifixion (San Cassiano), 57
Paradiso, 57
Last Judgment, 57
The Golden Calf, 57
Presentation of the Virgin, 58
Miracle of St. Agnes, 58
Marriage in Cana, 58
Titian (Tiziano Vicelli), 54, 56, 57, 83, 102, 108, 203, 207
birth of, 19-20 and note, 68
survives Michelangelo, 25
his drawing compared to Michelangelo's, 38
mediocrity of his works in Venice, 49, 50
purely a painter, 52
lack of decorative feeling, 52
Titian—*Continued*
his power of design, 64
Veronese's portrait of, 65
compared to Veronese as portraitist, 66
as colourist, 70, 74
his occasional coarseness, 72
his influence on Rubens, 99
imitation of, by Baudry, 200
Titian, works of
Doge Grimani before Faith, 51
Assumption of the Virgin, 51
St. Mark and other Saints, 51
Pietà, 51
St. Peter Martyr, 51
St. Lawrence, 51
The Annunciation (San Salvatore), 51
San Giovanni Elemosinario, 51
Presentation of the Virgin, 51, 52
Pesaro Madonna, 52
The Annunciation (Scuola di San Rocco), 53
The Man with the Glove, 203
Titus, the son of Rembrandt, his birth, 119
his partnership with Hendrickje, 120
marriage and death, 120
Trollope (Anthony), on Millais's illustrations to "Orley Farm," 174
Troyon (Constant), 138
Tryon (Dwight W.), 147
Turner (Joseph Mallord William), as author of "The Fallacies of Hope," 131

Turner—*Continued*
his genius, 137
"the joke of the public," 153

Ulenburgh (Rombertus), father of Saskia, 117

Values, Corot's study of, 138
use of, by Puvis, 224
Van Dyck, 207
influence of, on English portrait school, 102
transmits influence of Rubens to English school, 137
Vasari (Georgio), modern depreciation of, 11
his characterization of Perugino, 14
his opinion of Michelangelo's "Battle of Pisa," 34
Vedder (Elihu), 146
Velasquez (Diego Rodrigues de Silva y), 96, 174, 207, 240
his handling compared with Tintoretto's, 59
with Veronese's, 67
the pure painter, 98
compared with Hals, 104, 108, 114
preciseness of his early work, 107
his influence on Manet, 139
relation of his handling to his colour, 261
compared with Sargent, 265
with Whistler, 243-245
his abundance, 244
Velasquez—*Continued*
mastery of large canvases, 244
notation of form and brilliancy of execution, 244
Whistler plus Sargent, 244
one of the greatest of painters, 245
Velasquez, works of
The Surrender of Breda (The Lances), 244
The Maids of Honour, 244
The Spinners, 244
Venice, buildings of
Academia de' Belli Arti, 49, 50, 51
Church of the Frari, 49
Church of the Gesuiti, 6
Church of the Madonna del Orto, 57-58
Church of the Pietà, 61
Church of San Cassiano, 57
Church of San Giorgio Maggiore, 54
Church of San Giovanni Crisostomo, 49
Church of San Salvatore, 51
Church of San Zaccaria, 49
Church of Santa Maria della Salute, 58
Fondaco de' Tedeschi, 90
Museo Civico, 59
Palazzo Ducale, 50, 56, 57, 69
Palazzo Giovanelli, 50
Palazzo Labia, 61
Seminario Patriarcale, 50
Scuola dei Carmini, 61
Scuola di San Rocco, 53, 54